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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE MEETING IN THE FOREST.]

THE MYSTERY OF THE MILL.

CHAPTER I.

Her balmy mouth with rosy glow
Was imaged by the Love God's bow;
As sweet and pure as lotus leaf—
With perfumed teeth in pearly row
Like foam-beds on a coral reef.
Her golden hair, with glossy sheen,
Fell round her temples, rich and free;
With all the graceful beauty seen
In flowers of the labouring tree.

Upon a small, dashing stream, emptying in the river Reuch, upon the edge of the Black Forest, and within the Grand Duchy of Baden, stood a quaint stone mill.

It was quaint from its moss-covered walls, its closely tiled, squat roof, and from its great overshot water-wheel, the diameter of which was considerably greater than the height of the building to which it was attached.

Nature had fashioned just the place for this mill. Over a spur of the Schwarzwald (Black Forest) range came pouring a mountain torrent, in a fall of nearly a hundred feet, and the projector of the mill, who must have been something of an engineer, had contrived a very simple, safe and sure method of bringing just the quantity of water to his wheel required, no matter whether the torrent were raging in fullness or musically falling in its mid-summer quietude. And the water did not fail. Far up in the mountains, taking their sustenance from melting snows and condensing clouds, were springs that never ceased their crystal tribute. So this mill was valuable. When other mills were forced to lie idle, either from want of wind or lack of water, the huge wheel under the cliff revolved obedient to its master's will whenever there was a grist to be ground.

The dwelling was also of stone, and stood upon a

shelf elevated above the mill, and was connected with the latter by a covered passage and a long flight of stone steps. The cot was of two storeys, with a single pitch of tiled roof slanting towards the mill.

This shelf, or plateau, with its substratum of solid rock, had become so deeply covered with the vegetable decay of ages that quite a garden was afforded, beyond which the dense forest lifted its grim front on every hand.

It so chanced that on a certain summer's morning all the dwellers of the cot were standing beneath the low piazza that covered the entrance from the garden.

This piazza had not been built for show or ornament, but to protect the door and windows from the fury of the storms that often came sweeping down from the heights of the Schwarzwald.

There were four persons in the group.

Foremost stood Jacob Murdner, with his hand upon the bridle of a saddled mule. He was over fifty, rather short of stature, with broad, massive shoulders and a frame of great strength throughout. His head was large and covered with a thick matting of coarse red hair, but this size of head had nothing intellectual about it; it was the animal part that swelled. The brow was low and retreating and the top of the skull, where phrenologists locate the higher moral faculties, was as flat as a brick. His red face had a shrewd, cunning look, and also a sinister look. He could laugh and smile upon extraordinary occasions, but the usual expression of his heavy features was rather morose than otherwise. His eyes were of a purplish hue, small and sunken, and inclined to be restless. Whatever may have been his habit in other years, he had come now to look no man squarely in the face when conversing with him.

He was dressed in rather loosely-setting breeches of drab cloth, long blue stockings, with heavy shoes upon his feet, and upon his shoes and at his knees were bright silver buckles. His waistcoat of faded silk was broad-flapped, with deep pockets, and his

upper coat was long and ample, with a double row of huge silver buttons. Upon his head he wore a three-cornered hat, after the fashion of gentlemen of the time, for Jacob was going to town, and though he held secrets of life very close within his own bosom, he was willing that people who beheld him should know that he was a man of means.

The mill was a source of sure income, with its un-failing power, and then Jacob had been grasping and saving.

It was whispered that he was not scrupulously honest in the matter of taking toll, but people who depended upon him for their meal could not well afford to make him angry.

Had any one man been called upon to suffer the loss of the overplus of toll that went into the miller's capacious bins he would undoubtedly have made a fuss, but as the unjust tax was distributed among hundreds, the burden did not fall heavily upon any individual.

By the side of Jacob stood Casper Murdner, his son.

He was over twenty, taller than his father and almost as stout of build. He would have been known for Jacob's son. He had the same broad-based, low-topped red head, the small purple eyes, and the same general contour of features. His face was full as red as was his parent's, and there was certainly room for suspicion that the juice of the wise helped toward the high colouring of the visage.

At the present time Caspar's garb—a stockings, breeches, blouse and hat—was of light drab stuff, his work for the day being in the mill.

Next stood a woman a little past the middle age, stout, plain-featured and homely, clad in a skirt and jacket of homespun woollen stuff. Her name was Fenella Deckritz, and she had been Jacob's house-keeper since the death of his wife.

Lastly, framed in the doorway, like a gleam of bright, warm sunshine in a dark place, or like a transcendent gem gleaming amid desert sands, stood a girl of not more than twelve or thirteen years.

Her hair was dark and glossy and wavy, sweeping back from a fair and open brow; her eyes were large and lustrous, and of that hue of golden brown which is beautiful and attractive in any light; her face was the very perfection of loveliness; and her form, slight and graceful, was well fitted to bear auspiciously her manifold charms. She was called Pauline.

Jacob said she was his child, but not many believed him, though nobody could successfully dispute him.

For a time there has been silence in the group. Jacob had given his directions to his son and to Fenella, and he had then stood for a little while with his head bowed, kicking the pebbles at his feet.

By-and-by he looked towards the girl in the doorway, and tried to smile.

"Come here, little one," he cried.

She went to him, but not on the wings of love.

The miller stooped and kissed her, and then, resting his hand upon her head, he said:

"When I come home to-night, Pauline, I will bring you a pretty present, and I—I think—I shall have a story to tell you. Now be a good girl, and you may play in the mill when Casper comes there is no danger."

And then Jacob Murner mounted his mule, and rode away.

But Pauline did not care to go into the mill with Casper.

She watched Jacob until he was lost to sight, and then followed the housekeeper into the kitchen.

"Fenella," she said, after sitting for a time in thoughtful silence, "I think you are very good to me."

"Why, bless your heart!" exclaimed the woman, impulsively, "how could I help being good to you, and loving you? I don't think there ever was such another sweet tempered, good little girl as you are."

The child's face brightened for a moment, and then grew serious again.

"But, Fenella, you try to hide from the master how good you are to me."

"Pish! That is your imagination, child."

"No," persisted the girl; "you do not smile upon me when he is near, and you do not allow me to make it known to him, or to Casper, that you are teaching me to speak and write the French language."

"Because," said Fenella, quickly, "old Jacob has his own ideas about bringing up children. He thinks they should not be taught too much, and he thinks it won't answer to make too much of them when they are young. It will make them forward and vain, he says. And, moreover, he does not like the French. He doesn't like that people to come near him, and he doesn't like to hear the language. If he were to know, Pauline, there would be an end of it all."

"Oh!" cried the girl, frightened at such a prospect, "he shall never know from me. I will be very careful."

"You cannot be too careful, my child—just remember that."

A silence followed, and as Fenella began to wash the breakfast dishes, Pauline came to her assistance. When the last tin had been wiped and put away, and the housekeeper had seated herself by the fire-place and lighted her pipe, Pauline said to her, in low beseeching tones:

"Fenella, do you believe Jacob Murner is my father?"

The woman started, and looked up.

"Mercy! child, what a question to ask me. How should I know? He says you are his own. I know no more."

"But I don't believe it," pursued the girl.

"Why don't you believe it?"

"Because I don't. If he were my father—if his blood ran in my veins—I should feel something of a child's love for him, which I never did feel. I love you, Fenella, much better than I love either him or Casper."

"Well, well, child," returned the housekeeper, more deeply touched by the affectionate look and words than she was willing fully to show, "the truth will come out one of these days. Be patient, and don't worry."

"What do you suppose he meant by saying that he should have a story to tell me to-night?" Pauline asked after another pause.

"You had better wait and see."

And with this the woman got up and went out, evidently for the purpose of escaping further questioning.

Jacob Murner returned home before sunrise, very silent, and seeming very thoughtful.

During supper he spoke not a word and at the con-

clusion of the meal he went down to the mill, where he had a long conference with his son.

Candles had been lighted and Pauline had taken her sewing, when the old miller entered the kitchen and approached her.

He held something in his hand which glittered brightly in the candlelight, and his face wore an unusual smile but it was not a hearty one. It is doubtful if, of late years, at least, Jacob Murner had felt the warmth of a smile at his heart. But he was evidently in very good humour for him.

"Well, my little one," he said, "I have brought you the present I promised. Do you not think it pretty?"

Pauline looked, and saw a chain dangling from the miller's fingers.

It was long and bright, reflecting back the rays of light in wondrous flashes.

"Oh, it is very, very pretty!" she cried.

She loved the beautiful, and could not but like it.

"It is of the purest finest gold, my little one; and it is yours. I give it to you as a present on this day when the new relations commence between us."

And then speaking he threw the chain over her head and let it hang from her neck, after which he took a seat before her.

Pauline forgot the chain—forgot everything but the best words which the miller had spoken. What did they mean?

But she was not left long in suspense. Jacob was not the man to bandy words when he had anything in mind which he really wished to say.

"Pauline," he commenced, fixing his look upon the child instead of upon the girl's face, "what I have to say to you I am going to say in a very few words. You are old enough now to understand. I should have said you before had I thought it could have done any good. I know the thoughts has often been in your mind, and you have asked me more than once whether I am your true father. In one sense—so far as love can go—I have been, and will be, a father to you; but I am far, far removed from being your father in fact."

Pauline's hands were tightly clasped in her lap, and her large, lustrous eyes were fixed upon the speaker with eager interest.

"Your mother," continued Jacob, "was a distant relative of mine. I think our grandparents were cousins. When quite young she became the wife of a coal-burner of the Black Forest, named Galbo. You were born to them, and when you were less than a year old they were both snuffed to death in a coal-pit. I was sent for as the only living relative of the dead woman, she having been left an orphan in early childhood, and having found a home for a time with my father."

"I saw your parents decently buried, and then I tried to find relatives of Galbo. I only know that he had come from Bavaria. I searched in vain, but I did not give up until I had satisfied myself that he had left no near relatives behind him. Of course there was but one thing left for me to do. I took you home as though you had been my own child, and my wife was glad."

"Only three short years, however, did she live to enjoy your smiles. She died, and I hired Fenella to come in and take care of my home and of you. I have not been a very happy man since my wife died, as you know; but I can declare that I have been far less unhappy because of your presence."

"I once thought, Pauline, that I should never tell you the truth—that I should always claim you as my own flesh and blood—but my conscience would not permit me to live such a falsehood. So now you know the story. But, my little one, it can make no difference in our lives. This is your home, and I shall love you just the same. Ay, I think I shall love you better now that there is no deceit between us. You have become necessary to my comfort, and all your reasonable wants shall be gratified. You will stay with me?"

The girl looked up wonderingly.

"Indeed," she said, "where could I go if I did not stay here?"

"Surely," returned Jacob, laughing—"where indeed? And, moreover, Pauline, you are my child in the eyes of the law. I did not tell you that your father was not quite dead when I reached him. With his dying breath he gave his infant child into my care, and when I had made sure that he had left no relatives who had a better right, I went to our Court at Oberkirch, where my claim was recognised and recorded, and the child was made mine by adoption. And now, my rosebud, you will try to love me, won't you?"

"Yes," said the girl, timidly.

"And you will be good and true?"

"Yes."

"That's right. Now go to bed and dream over the story and get up to-morrow morning as gay and happy as you can."

And with this Jacob Murner arose and went out. Pauline went to her little chamber, but not to sleep. Instead of going to bed she sat by the window and gazed out upon the stars. Evidently very deep and weighty thoughts were in her mind.

She must have been at the window full two hours when she heard Fenella ascend the stairs and enter her room, and after a little further thought she crept into the housekeeper's apartment.

"Mercy! child, ain't you abed?"

But Pauline did not heed the salutation. She went straight up to the woman and laid her hand upon her arm. Her eyes were very large, and had a wild, mysterious look.

"Fenella, do you believe my father was a charcoal burner? You heard the story which Jacob told to me. Do you believe it?"

"In the name of all the saints, child—"

"Never mind the saints, Fenella. Do you believe my father was a Bavarian coal-burner and my mother a poor peasant of the Schwarzwald?"

"Look ye, child," said the housekeeper, solemnly, "I believe what I know, and I know that in law Jacob Murner is your father—that is, he has the full authority of a father, and you had better make him know that you distrust him. Don't go to wasting fancies that can only make you miserable. Take the best you can get and make the most of it. And now go to bed and go to sleep, and don't think such thoughts any more."

And Fenella led the girl to her own door and left her there.

Pauline might thereafter keep her tongue from the forbidden subject, but her free thought was not to be so easily dammed.

Some months later an incident occurred, the important results of which, to both Pauline and Jacob Murner, were not to be reckoned for years.

It was on the afternoon of a bright autumnal day that a party of hunters came down the mountain path, and reined up before the miller's dwelling. There were six in the party, and they asked for refreshment. The spot where the miller lived was a middle-aged man, of commanding presence, and affable bearing, who at once excited Fenella's respect. She had seen enough of the upper classes, having served a noble French family beyond the Rhine for several years, to know that the present visitors were not of the common herd. She invited them into the house, where she offered them wine, and bread, and milk. Jacob Murner, from a window of the mill, had seen them, but instead of going up to the house, he put on his blouse, and went away into the wood.

When the leader of the party had finished his repast he caught sight of Pauline, and called her to his side. She came unhesitatingly, and looked frankly up into the gentleman's face, as though she had been used to such company all her life.

The stranger smoothed back her glossy hair, and gazed admiringly into her sweet face.

"Whose child is this?" he asked, of Fenella.

"She belongs to the miller, sir."

"But he is not my father," quickly and emphatically added Pauline. "My father and mother are both dead, and Jacob Murner has adopted me."

The stranger cast an inquiring glance at Fenella, who, after a little thought, said:

"I'll tell you, sir. Her parents both died when she was but an infant. Her mother was a distant relative of my master, and at the request of the dying father he took the child under his own care and protection, where she has been ever since."

"Of what nationality were her parents?"

"Her mother was of Baden, sir, and her father was a Bavarian."

"But this child is certainly French."

Fenella coloured and hesitated, but finally she made answer:

"I have heard my master say there was French blood in her veins. Her mother's mother was a Frenchwoman of the Vonsgen."

The gentleman took the beautiful child upon his knee and kissed her.

"I have a little girl at home," he said, "but she has not the rose upon her cheeks as you have. Heaven keep you, my child!"

Then he gave her a piece of gold, and asked: "Buy something with that by which you can remember me."

"I can remember you by this just as well, and it came from your own hand, too," said Pauline, holding the bright new twenty-franc, and dividing her admiring gaze between it and the donor.

The look of the stranger showed that the words pleased him much.

He kissed the child again, and then asked her what was her name.

"My name is Pauline. Will you tell me who gave me this beautiful gold piece?"

"Yes, my dear. My name is Charles Frederick."

Fenella uttered an exclamation of surprise, and devoutly crossed herself, not in fear of the visitor, but in fear that she might have said something to offend him.

"You are the grand duke?" said Pauline, looking up confidently.

"Yes."

"I am glad."

"And why are you glad?"

"Because," replied the child, with a profundity of frankness and truth in the lustrous depths of her golden eyes, "I shall know hereafter that our grand duke is a good man."

"Heaven bless you, sweet one! I hope we shall meet again."

Another kiss, and he set Pauline upon the floor, and arose from his seat.

Then he gave to Fenella a piece of gold, and having thanked her for her kindness he took his leave, and very shortly afterwards he and his followers were riding away towards Oberkirch.

Pauline watched him while he was in sight, and then went up to her little chamber to put away her piece of gold, resolved that she would keep it always. Should she ever see the grand duke again? She hoped so. She waited months—she waited years—but he came not; and yet the lapse of years did not in the least degenerate her remembrance of him.

CHAPTER II.

It is now the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eleven.

Six years have passed since the introduction of the inmates of the old mill-cot of the Black Forest. Jacob Mardner has grown to be sixty years of age, and his red hair has turned to be very gray. He is still stout and strong, though his broad shoulders are somewhat bent; and during these years he has not improved in his disposition. Instead of growing amiable with age, he has, if possible, grown more selfish and morose.

He has turned the care of the mill almost entirely over to his son, and much of his time he spends in an obscure wine-shop of the neighbouring town. There is a mystery in his life which has come to puzzle even good Fenella.

Casper is now twenty-six, and is stronger of frame than his father ever was. He has associated much with the young men of Oberkirch; and having money to spend, he stands well with a certain class.

He has engaged deeply in so-called manly sports, and has fought two duels with the small sword, in both of which he severely wounded his antagonist and came off victor.

He is arrogant and overbearing, and often under the influence of liquor.

Fenella Deckritz is now fifty. She has grown stouter, and is not so sprightly as she once was.

More than once she has thought of leaving the old mill. The vagaries of Jacob trouble her, and she also whispers of ghosts and hobgoblins, and of a haunted corner in the old stone house. She is sure there is a chamber which has been walled up and hidden, and she thinks some dreadful deed has in a bygone time been perpetrated there.

Once she said something of this to her master, but he turned upon her so fiercely and cursed her so for her whimsical folly, that she never ventured to mention the subject again. And she would have left him then, as she would have left him before and since, had it not been for Pauline. And yet, as in the other times, she was careful to hide her love for the maiden from old Jacob.

And Pauline, this was her nineteenth summer. There had been winters—black, cold, dreary winters, under those mountains of the Black Forest—but nothing of their chill or frost had remained with Pauline—only the warmth, the brightness and the gold of the summer sunshines had been permitted to make impress upon her.

Beautiful as a child, she was far more beautiful as a woman. The brown hair had become darker and more glossy; the golden brown eyes had become more golden in depth and intensity of warm effulgent light; the contour of the perfect face had become well-nigh matchless in its body and outline of loveliness; and the whole frame, having lost not one whit of the elasticity of childhood, had taken to itself strength and dignity and womanly beauty.

Pauline often stood before her little mirror, and she often regarded the reflection of herself in the glassy pools below the mill.

She knew that she was fair and comely, but not with this vain thought did she thus contemplate her-

self in her reflected image. No, the burden of her thought was:

"It cannot be that my father was a Bavarian coal-burner and that my mother was of Mardner's herd. I will never believe it—never!"

As has already been remarked, Fenella had served in a noble French family. It may be said, in fact, that though German by birth and parentage, she had received more of her education in France than in Germany. During the terrible days of 1793, she had seen her noble patrons all shot down by the blood-thirsty Jacobins, and returning to her fatherland, heart-sore and weary, she had been very willing to accept the retired forest home which Jacob Mardner offered her. And in the matter of education, Fenella had been of incalculable assistance to Pauline. She had not only taught the girl numberless feminine accomplishments, but she had also taught her to speak and write the French language in its purity.

It was a beautiful summer evening, and having helped Fenella to finish up her housework, Pauline took her sketching materials, and went out into an open glade towards the mountains. In the matter of sketching and drawing she was entirely self-taught. Pictures that pleased her she had bought at Oberkirch, and had patiently copied them, and in time she ventured the attempt to copy from Nature. If Fenella's judgment was to be relied upon, she had made most wonderful progress.

She had seated herself upon a moss-covered stone, and was sketching a vista through which could be seen the slanting roof of the old mill-cot.

She was working most assiduously when suddenly her hand was arrested by the impression that she was not alone; and as she held her pencil idle she distinctly heard a movement behind her.

She would have arisen at once, but a hand, laid lightly upon her shoulder, held her down, and a rich, musical voice said:

"No, no, fair lady, do not suffer me to interrupt you. If I have intruded I beg ten thousand pardons. I came myself to this sylvan glade to catch with my pencil if possible some of its beauties. I have succeeded beyond my utmost expectations. See."

And the speaker handed to the maiden his open book.

But Pauline did not look then at the book. The stranger had stepped around almost in front of her while he had been speaking, and upon him she looked.

He was a young man, not more than six-and-twenty, of medium height, and most exquisitely proportioned.

Your true anatomist would at once have decided that there was vastly more muscle in that comely frame than at first sight appeared; and he could also have told that health and strength and buoyant spirits were his, inherited first and kept intact by manly exercise and proper living.

His face, though somewhat tanned by exposure, was fair and handsome, its beauty resulting not more from its truly classic and heroic outlines than from the majesty of the inner man which was reflected upon it. His finely shaped head was covered by a mass of light brown curls, and his eyes, clear and honest, were of the deepest blue. He had removed his velvet cap, and stood with his head bared. His garb, though in no way aristocratic, was comely and tasteful in the extreme. His stockings were of white silk; the tight knee-breeches of sea-green velvet; the vest of amber satin, and daintily embroidered; and over all was a dark crimson velvet doublet. Many young gentlemen of Oberkirch and Offenbergl dressed as well, and some of them far more expensively, but not one of them had Pauline ever seen so tastefully dressed as was this man.

She was not afraid. Her woman's instinct—her unfailing interpretation—told her that the man before her was not only a gentleman, but true and honourable to the core. In every line and lineament of his handsome face, in his frank, hearty smile, and in the brave, honest light of his dark blue eyes, was reflected an inner man of truth and reliability. When she had completed her survey she arose to her feet.

"Pardon me, fair lady. Will you tell me that I do not intrude?"

"There can be no intrusion in this wide forest, I should judge," said Pauline, with a smile.

"But upon your privacy—do I intrude upon that?"

"If you are what I judge you to be—an artist and a gentleman—no."

"I am certainly an artist," replied the young man, with a brightening look, "and I trust I may prove myself a gentleman. But you have not looked at my sketch. If you will resume your seat you can examine it more easily."

And as he thus spoke he took her hand, and very kindly and delicately placed her back upon the moss-covered rock.

The rock afforded plenty of room, and by a simple but modestly expressive inclination of the head Pauline intimated that it would please her to have him sit also. Perhaps she would rather he should sit at her side than stand before her. He sat down, and then she looked at his sketch.

She first saw that it was purely artistic, and drawn by the hand of a master. There was a delicately sketched outline and shadowy filling of back ground made subservient to the central figure of the piece, which was no more nor less than a portrait of herself in profile. She was drawn with suspended pencil, and gazing up as though to catch inspiration. It had been hastily done, but as an outline sketch it was perfect. Pauline flushed with pleasure, and then looked up with a smile.

"I told you," the artist said, smilingly in turn, "that I had succeeded beyond my expectations in catching with my pencil the beauties of this sylvan glade. Did I not speak truly?"

"I suppose," said Pauline, rather demurely, "that a beautiful sketch, animated by an artist's inspiration, may be taken from a subject not in itself beautiful."

"Nay, say, lady: you do not speak as your heart thinketh. Let us, as lovers of art, be honest one with another. I hope we may be friends, and if that be so, our friendship must be based upon absolute truth and trust. You know my pencil had found a subject of rare beauty when I made that sketch."

Never had man spoken like this before to Pauline, and yes it did not sound strange in her ears. Something in her inborn nature—a spirit seldom awakened, but none the less real—deeply appreciated the sentiment. She looked up frankly, and thinking of the dreary years gone by, she said:

"Let us be friends, and let us be truthful. If you could know the life I have lived in yonder old mill you would believe me when I say that to-day I have found something beautiful in this glade. Heaven grant it may be as true and as good!"

Tears stood in her eyes as she ceased speaking, and for the life of him the artist could not keep back the moisture that flooded his own azure orbs. Very delicately, and with infinite tenderness, he took her hand.

"Will you tell me your name?" he asked.

"My name is Pauline?"

"The miller is not your father?"

"No. I never my parents. I think they died when I was an infant, and the miller has cared for me since. He has told me a story of my birth, which I do not believe, so I will not repeat it."

"My name," returned the artist, smilingly, "by a strange coincidence, is Paul. I am—"

"But your other name?" interrupted the maiden.

"You did not tell me your other name."

"Because I have no other. I will not bear the name of Mardner, my guardian, and I never knew my parents; so I am only Pauline—or, Pauline of the Mill."

"Then I must call you simply, Pauline?"

"Yes."

"Then I would like that you should call me only Paul, for so my true friends all call me—so I have been always called by those near and dear to me."

"If it would please you," said Pauline, with perfect simplicity, and in the true innocence of her true heart, "I will call you Paul."

The light of an exquisite joy beamed in the young man's blue eyes and irradiated his handsome face.

"Then call me Paul," he said, "and you shall know the rest. I am Paul Duval, I have established a shop for the sale of pictures, in Oberkirch. As you may judge from my speech, I am French. My parents are dead, and I am dependent upon my own resources. My name, if humble and obscure, is an honourable one."

"Oh," cried Pauline, with lively interest, "I saw your shop yesterday. I was in town with Fenella. It is a new one close by the old cathedral."

"Yes, and if you will call in the next time you visit the town, I will show you some very pretty pictures. And, Pauline, if you will permit me, I will help you with your sketching."

"Thank you, sir. I should be very grateful. All that I now know I have taught myself."

Paul Duval regarded her with surprise.

"Will you let me look at your book?"

She handed it to him, and he looked it over, from the crude beginnings, to the really artistic conclusion.

"Pauline," he said, with eloquent look and tone, "you are an artist. You have the true inspiration. It will be a great joy for me to give your pencil guidance in its reaching towards perfection."

He looked steadily into her face, and shortly added:

"You should be French, as well as I, if your face speaks truly."

"I think I am French. The miller acknowledges

that on my mother's side I may claim something of French blood; but I think he tells but a very small part of the truth."

"So think I. Ah, if I might teach you our language."

Pauline smiled a smile that was almost mischievous. She had great faith in Fenella; and Fenella had assured her that she spoke the French language with singular purity, as though her tongue had been born to it—in fact, that she spoke French more easily and naturally than she did German.

"Monsieur Paul," she said, speaking his own language, while the smile still rippled over her face, "you might, perhaps, lead me to improve my speech, but, really, I think I could speak French so that you might understand me. I have had almost painstaking and indefatigable teacher, and if I have not succeeded it must have been the result of my own obtuseness."

"My faith!" cried the artist, in glad surprise. "Tell me not that you are German. No tongue of German extraction could ever have syllabled our language with such liquid purity. This is indeed a new pleasure. No more German for us. But," and his countenance slightly fell as he asked the question, "who has been your instructor?"

"Fenella, our old housekeeper."

The cloud was gone from Paul's face in an instant.

"Is she French?"

"No she is German; but she lived for many years with a noble French family in Ardennes."

"Ah, in Ardennes? Do you know the name of the family?"

"It was the Count Geoffrey de Pommyoy."

"Another coincidence, Pauline. I know the de Pommyoy family well, and am acquainted with the present count. I have made some sketches for him."

"Fenella says the whole family were put to death by the dreadful people who had murdered the king."

"Not all of them, Pauline. I was but a boy at the time, only eight years old—I am six-and-twenty now—but I remember very distinctly. The oldest son was absent at the time of the massacre in Ardennes, being at school in Heidelberg. So his life was spared, and he is the present count."

"Oh, how Fenella would love to hear you talk of that old family!"

"Were it not that old Jacob might find fault," said Paul, "we would go down and see her now. We could put off the sketching lesson to another time. And, moreover, I should like a crust of bread and a drink of milk."

"The miller and his son are both gone away to Oberkirch, and will not be back until late," returned Pauline, quickly, as though she were very glad that it had happened so. "You shall have the milk and the bread, and I know Fenella will be glad to see you."

"Then let us go—but, Pauline, this shall not be our last meeting in this beautiful glade. And then here you must take your first lesson. I want you to try that old tiled roof in the extreme distance once more. If you will look at your sketch you will find that you have the lines too sharply drawn. Look, now, with the eye of the artist—not seeing as your knowledge of the object dictates, but seeing as it actually looks at this distance. You will observe that there are no clearly defined lines anywhere. The atmospheric effect of extreme distances—But I must not give you the lesson now. And yet, you will let me give it to you here at some future time?"

"Yes."

"Then let us go now to the house. I must come and sketch that some time."

He gave her his hand, and gently raised her from her seat, and then walked on close by her side. He was not properly gallant in his attentions. He was respectful, and deferential, and, at times, considerably tender. He gave her his hand again and again, to assist her over the rough places, and Pauline accepted the assistance gratefully. And yet she could have overlooked those same places, as she had done a hundred times, like a gazelle.

Ah! the time of all times had come to Pauline. Into her life, all unconsciously, had entered the new element which was to direct its current henceforth. Perhaps she did not know it yet.

She only knew now that she had found a companion whose presence brightened everything, and whose words were as sweet music to her thirsting soul. And she had not been led blindly on. Her love—the offspring of unbidden emotion—might be blind for a season, but not her judgment. She had carefully estimated the man's character, and if in her estimate she had made a mistake, she had done no more than thousands of wise and learned men have done who have had long years for the study of their object. But she knew she had not made a mistake.

She knew that Paul was all true, and noble, and good, and she walked on by her side, giving him her hand when he kindly offered to take it, with unflinching trust.

Ay, truly, Pauline was entering upon a new life, and little did she dream of the things yet hidden in the path that was opening before her.

CHAPTER III.

As they approached the house Pauline began to consider how she should introduce her new companion. The thought had not occurred to her before. How would Fenella receive the strange artist? She knew very well that Jacob Mardner had laid upon his housekeeper the duty of looking closely after his ward, and in all her life thus far she had never ventured upon any such experiment as this. Had the miller been at home she would not have dared to bring a strange young man with her from the forest. But if Fenella was offended, or found fault, she must make the best of it. She was woman enough now to begin to think and act for herself, and she fancied she could do it. Had the meeting in the forest anything to do with this new mental departure? Had the new element in her life already made itself felt in the current? Perhaps.

When they reached the open door of the dwelling Pauline led the artist directly into the tidy kitchen, where the old housekeeper was at work with her needle, seated by a window overlooking the mill. She looked up as the girl entered, and gave a great start when she saw the strange young gentleman.

"Fenella," said Pauline, summoning all her courage, and speaking in French, "this is Monsieur Paul Duval. He owns the new picture shop we saw near the cathedral."

Fenella bowed very coldly, without rising, and spoke not a word. She evidently saw that the man was young and very handsome, and that he was dressed like a gentleman. Had he been old and ugly it might not have mattered.

Pauline placed a seat for her guest, and thus continued:

"Monsieur is an artist, and is of course French. I met him by accident, and he helped me in my sketching. I have brought him to get some bread and milk. And, good Fenella, I thought you would like to see him, as he used to be acquainted with the old Count Geoffrey de Pommyoy, in Ardennes."

At the sound of this name the sewing dropped from Fenella's fingers, and she was upon her feet in a moment. She advanced slowly to where the artist sat, and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and the expression of her features softened wonderfully as she gazed into his frank and attractive face.

"Did you know the noble Count de Pommyoy?" she asked.

"I did," answered Paul.

"When?"

"I knew him when you were living at his chateau, and I remember you very well as the girl who used to come out and drive us away from the duck-pond when we were throwing sticks at the birds. Don't you remember a little boy whom they used to call Paul?"

There were tears in Fenella's eyes.

"Yes, yes," she said, in a half-whisper, "I remember."

"My father, though an artist," pursued Paul, "was a friend of the count, and I often visited at the chateau, and played with the children."

"I remember the boy called Paul. And you are he?"

"Yes."

Fenella sat down and wiped her eyes, and when she looked up again coldness for Paul Duval, or fear of him, had gone from her face for ever. In her estimation the de Pommyoys of Ardennes were the grandest people that ever lived, and one who had been admitted within the charmed circle as a friend must of necessity be respectable and honourable.

"Alas!" she said, "how sad a fate was theirs!"

"Yes," returned Paul, with heartfelt sympathy, "it was sad, indeed; but the glory of the house is not departed. You remember at the time of that wicked work of wicked men, the oldest son, Alphonse, was absent at school in Heidelberg."

"But the butchers found him, did they not?"

"No; Alphonse de Pommyoy remained abroad until the enemies of his house were hurled from power, and then returned in safety. Napoleon restored to him the confiscated estates of his father, and he is now the count, with a wife and children, in the old chateau."

"Bless the saints!" ejaculated Fenella, raising her hands towards heaven. "You have made my heart glad, good sir. The grand old name will not die out. I should like to see Alphonse. I have held him upon my knees. I went to live at the chateau when the count first brought home his bride. That

was five-and-thirty years ago. I was but a girl then—only fifteen. And—But bless me, you are tired and hungry. You can tell me of the Count Alphonse when you have eaten. Pauline, do you bring the milk. The pan nearest the window is of this morning's milking."

Never did Pauline set forth to obey Fenella more joyfully. She had no more fear. She knew that Paul had won his way to the woman's heart, and she had confidence to believe that his truth and honour and goodness would keep the hold he had gained.

Had she asked herself why she was so glad, a satisfactory answer might not have been forthcoming.

But she did not seek to analyze the contents of the cup. She only knew that the draught was sweet, and she drank unhesitatingly.

A tempting repast was very soon set before the visitor, who did it ample justice; and after he had eaten he talked again with Fenella about the old times at the Chateau de Pommyoy, and told to her all of the present that he thought would interest her. And he conversed, too, as though it were a pleasure to him.

And one thing more, which perhaps gave the old housekeeper the highest estimate of his amiability—he listened as well as he talked.

At length he arose from his seat, saying it was time for him to go.

"I have to walk back to Oberkirch, and there is not more than an hour of sunlight left for me."

"We shall see you again I trust," said Fenella.

"You certainly shall. You have taught Pauline to speak her native tongue—and you will not deem me guilty of empty flattery if I say that no professor could have taught it to her in great purity—and now I would like to guide her for a season in the use of the pencil. She possesses a talent in that direction that should be cultivated."

"Her native tongue, did you say?" queried the woman.

"I said so," answered Paul, with a bow.

"I should say German was her native tongue."

"I cannot think so. But we will not dispute. If she is German born, she may thank you for having made a French woman of her."

The artist smiled as he spoke, and then took his cap and turned towards the door.

Once Fenella moved as though she would call him back, but she spoke no word. Pauline went with him to the piazza.

"You will sketch in the old glade some pleasant afternoon?" he said.

"Yes," she answered.

"Then I shall see you again are long. Until then Heaven keep you!"

Pauline watched him until he had gone from her sight, and then she turned back into the kitchen to find that Fenella had cleared the food and the dishes from the table.

"Pauline," the housekeeper said, slowly and thoughtfully, "neither Jacob nor Caspar had best know of Paul Duval's visit. There is no use that we should speak of it."

"I shall not mention it, be sure, Fenella."

"I think," she continued, in the same slow and thoughtful manner, "that he is a worthy and honourable young man. He would not be a trusted friend of the noble Count de Pommyoy else."

"I am sure he is worthy and honourable, and true," responded Pauline, with zealous interest.

"Time will prove him, my child."

And without farther remark Fenella resumed her seat at the window and took up her sewing, while the maiden went about her household duties.

It was late when the miller and his son came home—past nine o'clock—and Fenella and Pauline quickly prepared their supper.

Both of them had been drinking; but Jacob had not drunk enough to in any way unsettle him. The liquor made him more morose and sullen, and kept him for the most part silent. He regarded his fair ward with furtive glances which she did not fail to notice; and there was a new look of cunning in his purple eyes—or the old look had become intensified. His gaze, so wolfish, troubled the maiden exceedingly, and she kept out of his way when she could.

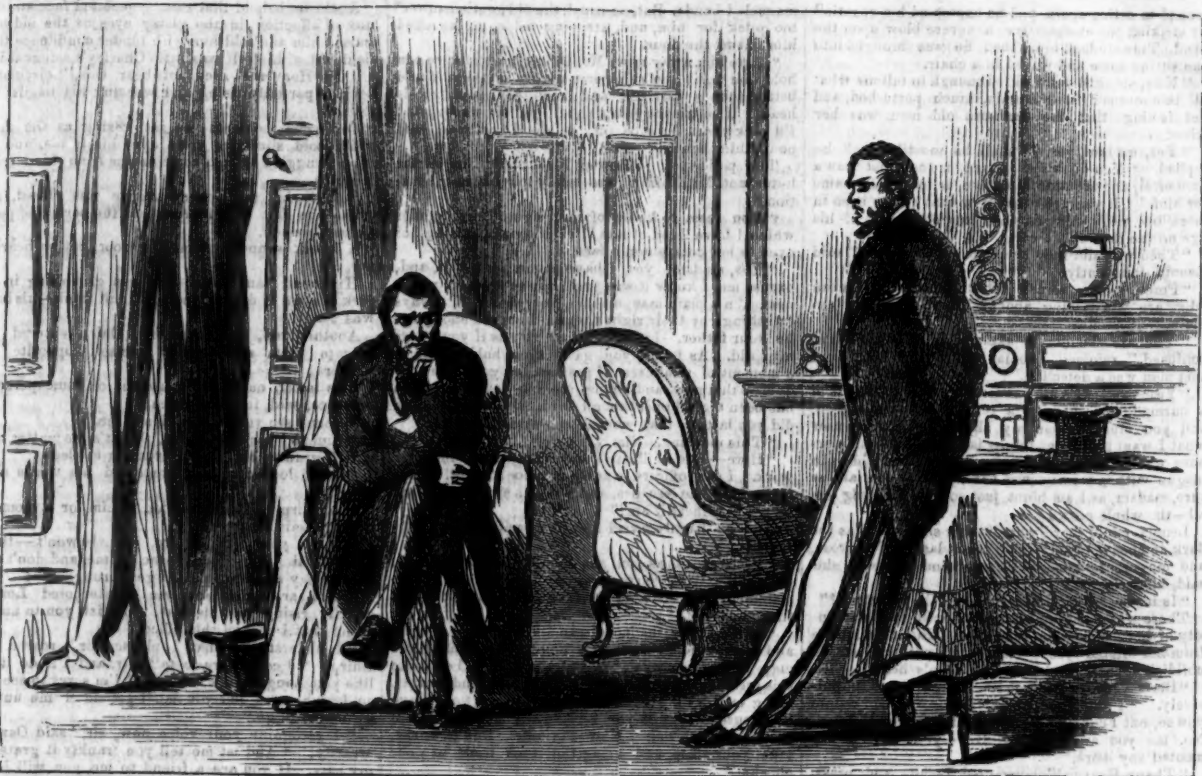
Caspar, on the other hand, was rough and boisterous. He had drunk more than usual and talked loudly of his doings in town. He had soundly thrashed a stout Bavarian sergeant of infantry and put two corporals out of doors, neck and heels.

Jacob got up from the table first, and sat down by the fireplace with his pipe. By-and-bye Caspar arose, and stood for a time leaning upon the back of his chair.

Pauline was at the sink, washing the dishes which Jacob had used.

Presently she heard an unsteady step behind her.

(To be continued.)



[AN ECCENTRIC VISITOR.]

A TERRIBLE TRIAL; FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE fresh persecution to which Leonia had been subjected by the menaces of the so-distant detective was fast becoming intolerable.

Nearly every day since his first visit he had called at the house and terrified her by artful insinuations concerning herself and Madame Bolah.

Twice had Leonia written to the chief and twice the reply had come, "I am sorry for you, but I cannot help you. The investigation must proceed."

Believing these communications to be genuine, Leonia's consternation and grief knew no bounds, and the servants began to whisper among themselves that "the missus was going crazy."

Poor Flossie, seeing her mother grow whiter each day and often absent herself from the table, began to feel an undefinable alarm, that sat heavily upon her heart and clouded her young spirit.

Nor was this all.

Eda, beholding with a fiendish joy the rapid decline of Leonia's health, redoubled her exertions to torture her, with the hope of at last breaking down her reason and rendering her an imbecile.

It was from one of these interviews that Leonia now came into the sitting-room, only to find the detective awaiting her, with a cool, sneering smile on his features.

From fire to fire—from terror to terrors worse confounded!

Leonia sank into a chair and rested her head against the back, without glancing at her visitor.

Eda had threatened to cause the arrest of Oswald Loring before night, unless Leonia should send her a hundred pounds!

Leonia had resisted this extortion, and her tormentor had sworn a fearful vow to make good her words.

And now Mrs. Milton was in suspense—a suspense of fear and horror.

"You are not well this morning, madam?" said the detective. "Perhaps I had better postpone my interview."

"Oh, go on," answered Leonia, listlessly. "I

don't care what you say—it can make but little difference."

She closed her eyes and clasped her hands. There was something to arouse one's sympathy in her very attitude—to say nothing of the pale, wearied face, now so thin and devoid of spirit.

"I have made considerable advancement since I saw you last," the man continued, rising and pausing before her. "I have ascertained that Madame Bolah and this woman who visits you are identical!"

Leonia's eyes slowly opened, and the muscles around her mouth contracted slightly. He saw that he had aroused her apprehension, and it pleased him, but he proceeded, stoically:

"I have also learned that you hired this woman to encompass the death of Rosa Foster!"

"Oh, Heaven!" ejaculated Leonia, pressing her hands to her heart, while her form quivered.

"And, as in duty bound, I have revealed the same to the chief. I shall be compelled to take you into his presence."

The oppressed woman uttered a low moan of anguish, and gasped for breath.

"Do not be frightened. There may be some way of avoiding your immediate arrest. The chief feels deeply for you; it is a sad business."

"Give me a drop of that water," murmured Leonia, faintly.

The man poured out a glass of the cool liquid, and held it to her lips, while a look of cruel exultation shone from his black eyes. Leonia drank a little, and then shuddered again.

"Come, be strong. The chief is waiting for you. There will be no expense. He will help you all he can, poor creature!"

"Pity from you!" she exclaimed, exasperated at his presumption.

"Pardon me; I see my sympathy is thrown away; it always is in such cases. Get your wraps, if you please. I shall wait but three minutes longer."

The contempt in his glance, the overbearing insolence of his tone, aroused what little strength Leonia had left, and in a firm voice she answered:

"I will not go with you! I will not endure such insults!"

"Then, painful as it may be, I shall have to take you."

He advanced and placed his hand upon her arm. She recoiled as from a serpent, and gazed upon him in mingled fear and loathing, her bosom palpitating convulsively.

At that moment the door slowly opened, and a stalwart man entered.

Softly advancing until he drew near the detective he raised his cane and beat that gentleman across the shoulders most lustily.

At the first stroke the detective turned and sought to wrest the instrument from the hands of his assailant, but in vain; the assailant was too quick for him.

Leonia, astonished and alarmed, retreated to one corner of the room, while the intruder, becoming angry, rained blows thick and fast on his opponent's head, meantime shouting:

"Take that, you scoundrel! you low, sneaking villain! I'll break every bone in your worthless body! Oh, pull out your pistol—pull it out, you coward! Shoot—blaze, if you want to, but look out for your arms!"

Whang! whang! came the stick across the muscles of the man's arms, and his revolver dropped to the floor, while a yell of pain escaped his lips.

Then he sprang towards his aggressor, but with remarkable celerity he dodged and again swung his cane.

"I'll pound you till I'm tired, you swindling vagabond! I've waited for this chance, and now I'll improve it. I'll make you suffer for every minute you've made that woman suffer, and then I'll leave you into jail and let your nurse your wounds, you thieving, squinting cheat!"

"Furies! Can't I stop you, you old codger?" cried the detective, and, clutching a chair, he brought it down with crashing force upon—the floor.

Again his nimble castigator had sprung aside and was now belabouring him from the rear.

"It's warm work, but I love to labour in a good cause! How's that, and that, and that? Confound your deceitful pictures! I wish my coat was off—I'd make a leopard of you! There, there, there!"

Three minutes had not elapsed, but the castigator was out of breath and the perspiration was flowing down his face in streams.

His victim, suddenly realizing that this meant something, now forgot all thoughts of revenge and ran swiftly towards the door.

Throwing it open, he sprang into the entry, only to find himself in the grasp of a powerful policeman.

With a howl of rage he struck the officer a stinging blow in the face, and attempted to leap over the baluster, but the officer grappled with him again, and they rolled on the floor together. The man was desperate, and he fought so valiantly that the policeman was obliged to call upon the man with a cane for aid. That gentleman, who was just beginning to feel comfortably cool, was not much pleased at being sum-

moned to action again, and he expressed his vexation by striking the ex-detective a severe blow upon the head. This stunned him, then he was brought into the sitting-room and placed in a chair.

"Now, sir, will you be kind enough to tell me what all this means?" said Leonia, much perturbed, and yet feeling that the eccentric old man was her friend.

"Yes, madam, yes. I shall be most happy," he replied. "You doubtless heard me call that man a scoundrel, and scoundrel, madam, is too good a name for him. I'll venture to say now that he has been in more low, mean scrapes than any other man of his age on the face of the earth."

"Then why did they keep him in the force?" said Leonia, innocently.

"Force, madam, force? What the deuce—I mean what are you talking about? That is, please explain."

"You are the one to explain. I am excited and confused," rejoined Leonia, wearily. "I thought this man was a detective."

"Yes—well—it's no wonder. I forget myself. I'm a curmudgeon, madam, a regular old curmudgeon, and you must excuse my slips. Let me say now what I want to. That fellow is a friend, and his purpose was to extort money and terrify you; he is in league with a woman who has swindled you, and as sure, madam, as I am blunt, just so sure I'll hang 'em all—the whole crowd!"

Leonia could hardly credit her senses. Was the dark and heavy cloud to be lifted at last? She arose, and moving forward, with one hand extended, she said, in a whisper:

"Is it true? Am I safe? Can't they hurt me?"

There was something almost painful in the intensity of her expression, in the distinctness that shone from her dilated eyes. This, taken with her simple, childish appeal, touched the old man's heart.

"Bless your sweet face!" he exclaimed, impulsively. "I didn't think the villain had worked on you so, but I couldn't have helped it before if I had. No, no, you are safe; yes, true—you shall be tormented any more."

"Thank Heaven!" murmured Leonia, and, pressing her hands to her face, she wept softly, with relief.

"It's a shame—a burning shame!" mused her new friend, regarding her compassionately. "She has suffered martyrdom, and if it had lasted much longer her mind would have broken down, there's no doubt of it. Oh, the villains, I'd like a hack at 'em all!"

The prisoner now returned to consciousness and cast a sullen glance of hate at his captivor. The latter, moving toward him, tore off a false white beard and pair of whiskers, disclosing the features of Jeremiah Chirp.

"Ah! you know me—I gave you a warning, didn't I? Then you tried to kill me, and I died—oh, yes, the morning papers had me killed and you saw your way clear, very clear. But I'm not dead, Andrew Morley—I'll send you to the gallows yet, Edward Miffin, and I've half a mind to pound you again for causing her so much grief."

"Ugh! I wish my hands were free!" articulated Miffin, writhing in his chair and glaring at Mr. Chirp with wolfish malignity.

"They never will be again, you villain!" roared the old man, shaking his fist in his face. "I would not be guilty of tormenting a pined man, but a fiend like you deserves all the misery one can put upon him. Who do you suppose saved me that night your hirelings sought my life?"

"May his heart rot and his face turn black who ever he was!" ejaculated the prisoner, grating his teeth.

"'Twas Oswald Loring. The man whom you deceived about this lady, and who paid you money because he thought you would injure her if he did not. He saved me and he'll look at you through iron bars yet!"

Leonia started as these words fell upon her ear, and a strange thrill went through her heart.

Oswald had tried to protect her. Then he loved her yet, but was estranged by doubt.

The hope was sweet, but she dared not cherish it; like others it might prove a delusion.

"I've a few more things to tell you and then I'll send you to jail. Golgus is a prisoner; Mister Jim is now on his way to the station—Mister Jim, who was to play the part of the 'chief,' when you hoped to frighten this lady into paying you handsomely. A fine game, but you reckoned Chirp was dead, and he wasn't, you villain! You ought to have had despatches this morning—oh, yes, look at them—Chirp took 'em—Chirp, the fog!"

Taking three telegrams from his pocket, he held them before Miffin, and as the latter read them and saw how he had been outwitted his facial muscles swelled, a terrible imprecation burst from his lips, and leaping to his feet, he struck at Mr. Chirp with his

manacled hands. But, as usual, the old gentleman was too quick for him, and, stepping aside, he knocked him flat to the floor.

"Take him away now, Mr. Officer, and be sure you hold him tight; he's slippery, mighty slippery. You'd better take a carriage, and keep your pistol at his head. If he tries to jump, shoot him, sir, shoot him! I'll back you. Now be off, before I get mad, and pound him again!"

The policeman followed his instructions to the letter, and Mr. Miffin was safely lodged in the station.

"You seem to know of the reign of terror under which I have lived of late," said Leonia, raising her eyes to her companion's face.

"Yes, madam, yes, I have some idea of it, and, excuse me, I know it was first caused by your weakness. I'm a plain man, madam, very plain. I always call things by their right names. I am old enough to be your father. I shall talk to you as if you were my child. As I said, you gave them hold on you in a moment of weakness, of passion, but you have conquered that now, and, hang me, I believe the lesson has been a good one, though hard. By the way, when did you last see that woman who resembles you?"

"This morning. She was here."

"Here—here! Then I have only half done my work. I sent officers to another place for her. Confusion! If she escapes, and she has already. What an old blockhead I am!"

And he hastily paced the floor with brows contracted.

"Perhaps it is as well she should go," said Leonia, at length. "Her looks certainly bear out in her statement that she is my sister, and I cannot affirm that she is not."

"Well, I am, madam, I am. Hang it! Angels and demons do not grow on one tree! Your sister may have done wrong, but she wasn't a fiend like this creature who has stolen your aim and grace. Hang me! We'll bring her up yet; don't you leave this house, and don't you receive any company until you hear from me. Now I'm off. Don't worry, take your sleep, and bring the roses back to your cheeks."

And before Leonia could reply the eccentric individual had restored his beard and whiskers to his face and left the room.

For a moment Leonia sat motionless, wondering if it were all a dream, or if indeed the meshes which lately seemed strangling her heart were out, letting the light of freedom shine once more into her soul. She realized it at length, and, sinking upon her knees she rendered thanks to Him who had carried her through the Valley and Shadow.

CHAPTER XX.

THERE were two letters on Oswald Loring's desk. The first one he opened was signed, "You know who," and read as follows:

"I have been here a dozen times, and I shall not come again. You avoid me purposely, but, remember, I am not to be played with. If you do not send ten pounds to Madame Bolah's office before two o'clock this day I will arrest you and Mrs. Milton as well."

A dark frown gathered on the lawyer's brow and he shut his lips firmly together.

He had not the courage to dare his correspondent, and he could not comply with his demands because he had just paid his office rent and board bill, which left him without five pounds in the world.

It was now eleven o'clock, and if he did not take the money in the course of business before one, he should have to borrow it.

"I have become a slave, an abject slave," he murmured, bitterly, and tore the letter into fragments.

Then, taking the other, he cut the envelope and extracted the missive.

With an apathy born of the recklessness which was fast gaining a holding in his nature he began its perusal.

Suddenly he sprang to his feet, his face frightfully pale, and his eyes shining with dismay.

Among the words left his lips in hoarse accents:

"Jacob Hawes will be here to-morrow. I am ruined!"

The paper dropped from his hand, he staggered toward the sofa, and, sinking upon it, buried his face in the cushion.

Disgrace would fall upon him ere the setting of another sun.

He could no meet it—his delicate nature shrank from it with an undefinable horror.

"And yet it is my fault," he groaned.

Now his mind travelled back over every scene with Rose and Leonia, back over the sarging tide of years to the contemptible ingratitude of Henry Lane, and then to the death-bed of Nathan Hawes.

Again he beheld that thin, emaciated face and the look of affection in the glassy eyes as the old man praised him and told him with tender confidence that his doubt of himself was little Charley's safeguard.

"Oh Heaven! I cannot bear this," ejaculated Loring, partially rising and working his hands together.

For some moments he sat gazing at the floor, while cold shudders swept over his frame, and his mind struggled to find some escape from this terrible dilemma.

But all in vain, every avenue was closed, and worse—he felt that he had shut the portals of peace against himself.

A knock sounded upon the door, but he heard it not.

His head sank lower—he was grovelling in the dark realms of despair, he could not think—his brain was chaos.

Another rap, and then Mr. Chirp entered the private room and seated himself opposite the lawyer.

The latter, only half conscious of some person's presence, said, in a low voice:

"I can't see you to-day; leave me."

"Humph! you talk pretty. What's the matter with you?" grunted Mr. Chirp, crossing his legs.

Oswald looked up, and repeated his words more sternly.

Mr. Chirp paid no attention to him for a moment, then he said, testily:

"I tell you I won't go, sir. I won't—that's English, ain't it? Now listen to me, and don't you dare say anything until I get through—"

"You are impudent, sir!" interposed Loring, angrily, rising from his seat. "I wish you to understand that I control this office."

"I understand what I please, sir," roared Mr. Chirp. "I came here to talk, sir, and I'll do it. I like you, hang me if I don't, and I'm sorry to see you so downhearted, but you can't get rid of me until I get ready to go."

"I recognize your voice now, sir," said Oswald, wearily. "And let me tell you frankly it grates on my ears. If you are a friend to me, you will leave me, for I can hardly endure myself—I am a ruined man!"

"Humph! You're a very foolish man—ruined or not."

It was with difficulty that Oswald had borne the man's presence at all, and now he was thoroughly roused.

Advancing to the centre of the room, he said, peremptorily:

"Your eccentricity, sir, does not excuse your persistent insolence. I tell you I am borne down with trouble, and if you do not leave my office I'll throw you out. I'm no boy to be browbeaten. Now go."

The old gentleman saw that the lawyer was in earnest, and knew that his trials had made him desperate, so he replied, in a manner less offensive:

"Hang it, Loring, isn't I your friend? Didn't you save my life? Didn't I tell you I'd save you, and won't I keep my word? The deuce, sir! what do you take me for?"

Oswald hesitated; his visitor's words seemed significant, and yet it were absurd to hang a hope upon them.

He decided to let him remain, however, and say what he pleased; it mattered little either way.

"Didn't you agree to understand my mood, you obstinate, imperious young scapegrace?" continued the eccentric individual, warmly. "Didn't you promise to be a friend to me, and here you are getting mad, and threatening to kick me out of doom. Ain't you ashamed of yourself? Now listen to me. Have you been idiot enough to engage yourself to Rose Foster?"

Loring clenched his fist but said nothing.

"Will you answer me, will you?"

"It is none of your business."

"Humph! you're amiable; but it is my business. I'll endure your petulance because I like you, but I must be answered when I speak. Here I've talking a week—confound it, sir, tell me, tell me."

"Miss Foster is my betrothed wife," said Loring, hoping to get rid of his caller by humouring him.

"Well, sir, you're a blockhead, and she's a double-dealing vixen."

Oscar sprang forward with uplifted arm, and Mr. Chirp escaped a forcible blow by an inch only. Then, catching the young man's wrists, he held them firmly, saying:

"You're mad, I tell you I came here to do you a service, and I'll do it. Don't struggle, young man, my old muscles are tough. There, be easy, keep cool, remember I can aid you, and I will—do you hear me?—I will if I have to fight for it."

And he pushed the lawyer into a chair; then, resuming his own seat, he continued:

"More, sir, more. Rose Foster is a reckless woman. I'm sorry to see you've been taken in, but you have. She has deceived you."

"This is nobility, I suppose—this defaming of an innocent girl!"

"Innocent girl!" repeated Mr. Chirp, irritably. "I'm the last man to breathe a word against any woman, but when I see a man led into a trap by a scheming female it's my business to warn him. I revere the name of woman in its purity, sir; but I will not shield wickedness in either sex. I'm not giving you suspicious, for that would be slander, and I'll cane any man who slanders woman; but I'm giving you facts. I tell you again, Rose Foster is a treacherous, deceitful, daring termagant."

"Stop! I'll hear no more. You have talked enough; now I want proof."

"Egad, sir, you shall have it!" he chuckled. "That's just what I was coming at. You go to French's Hotel, room forty-one, at half-past three this afternoon, and further, sir, you get into a closet there, and remain until you hear all you want to, and then, if you choose, you can see your angel face to face. Don't scowl, sir, you don't love her, but you're bound to think you do. Do as I tell you, and be sure to be concealed at just three o'clock, thirty minutes. You'll find the closet large and comfortable. There's the key to the room, and if you don't come you may get out of your confounded scrapes as best you can; you won't hear anything more from me."

Then Mr. Chirp arose and stalked from the office. "That man is undoubtedly a lunatic, but I'll go to the hotel—it may divert my mind, and it will certainly keep me from that villain who has promised to arrest me. Ugh! if Leonia should be arrested—but why do I shiver—have I not forgotten her yet?"

He arose and glanced towards the desk, one letter was gone, that of Jacob Hawes remained.

Mr. Chirp must have taken it, and for what?

A faint hope that the man whom he would fain believe insane could prevent "You know who" from carrying out his menaces occurred to the barrister's mind, and then he recalled the scene in Madame Bolah's office.

"Morley—Chirp called him Morley. Why do I forget in this way? Is my mind becoming weak, or have I no thoughts for anyone but Rose? Chirp also threatened Morley; he may have made good his words; at all events I'll not let this trouble me."

He relaxed into meditation, at intervals glancing toward Jacob Hawes's letter.

It seemed to possess a serpent-like charm for him, seemed to ring a m-nace in his ears.

Suddenly he exclaimed:

"Chirp may be Jacob Hawes—if it is likely. Nathan said his brother was odd. Oh, let me not imagine so much—I have more now than I can bear."

He grasped his hat, ordered the office-boy to look up, and hurried from the building.

The hours until three o'clock struck passed in restless anxiety, and at the time appointed Oswald went to the room in the hotel and concealed himself in a closet.

He had not been there five minutes when he heard the door open and a man enter.

Peering out Loring saw a black-bearded, coarse-looking individual attired in a seedy brown suit.

The disguise was so perfect that he could not believe the person to be Mr. Chirp, but he was soon convinced of the fact.

"Keep still, don't come out till they're gone. I hate scenes. Hist! They're coming now."

Loring closed the closet door, and simultaneously a knock sounded upon the other, and Mr. Chirp, advancing, admitted two persons.

The three being seated, Oswald heard the following words, in a voice he recognized as Mrs. Foster's:

"Well, we have come, now what do you want of us?"

"I don't want anything of you, it's none of my business. I don't care about it, only I was asked to do you a favour," was the reply, in a gruff, impatient tone.

"Let me talk with him, mother," interposed Rose, merrily. "You always made a muddle of everything. Now, sir, what have you to tell me?"

"That decent-like, young woman. Of course, you know I'm a friend of Morley's, and he wanted me to tell you that if after you're married to Loring you give him ten pounds a month, he'll keep dark."

"The villain," muttered Rose. "But I'll do it, anything to keep him away, he's the terror of my life."

"How do you know you can get that from Mr. Loring? It's a large sum of money to pay every four weeks," said Mrs. Foster.

"Get it!" repeated Rose, contemptuously. "Do you think I'm an idiot? Can't I make Oswald do anything I please?"

The listener in the closet could hardly credit his own senses.

Could this be his gentle, sensitive Rose? He began to feel an intense disgust with himself, and a hatred of the world.

"But 'twas yesterday he said that, and to-day he won't do it!" continued Mr. Chirp, in his assumed voice.

"Ah!" ejaculated Rose. "Why not?"

"'Cause he can't—the fact of it is your husband, Mr. Morley, is in limbo on three different charges."

"Oh, joy, joy! Now Oswald will never know it. Oh, mother, ain't I glad. But how long will they shut him up?"

"Oh, a matter of years, young woman. But you've no need to make a noise about it, you know."

"You are good. What shall I pay you for telling me this? But stop. If you can get my marriage certificate from that villain Morley I'll reward you well."

"I'll try, miss. I'm glad this has happened, it'd be rather awkward to have two husbands at once, but you've pluck enough for that, I think, miss."

"I generally have what I strive for," answered Rose, boastfully. "And I'd do anything to steal Loring from that Mrs. Milton."

"We had better go, if Mr. Beebe has nothing else to tell us," said Mrs. Foster, deprecatingly.

The man signified that he had finished and Rose pressing a document into his hand and promised him more if he would get the certificate. He said he would try as before, and then they left the room. Mr. Chirp immediately turned the key on the outside, and then called Loring out. He came, looking like a ghost, and his eyes actually blazing.

"So Morley is her husband, and she would have married me, and dared the law. How I have been duped. How I have been led like a weak dolt, a drivelling idiot. I wonder if indeed I am losing my brain? It must—it must be so."

He pressed his hands to his brow, and sighed heavily.

"Remember Chirp, regular old curmudgeon, you knew, but true blue," said the eccentric individual, cheerfully.

"Yes, and I thank you with all my soul," answered Loring, clasping his hands, and then added, meaningly: "But Jacob Hawes will come to-morrow. Ugh! to-morrow."

His intense excitement long continued had produced a weariness which in its aspect resembled dementia.

(To be continued.)

THE ISLAND MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Serle Shenstone concluded his recital a terrible spasm of pain was visible upon his handsome face, and Mark's heart, although to some extent despising the weakness and irresolution of his father, could not but feel the deepest commiseration for the abject despair depicted upon his parent's features.

After pausing for a few moments, as though in deep thought, he asked, in a voice which betrayed emotion:

"And was the shot fatal? Did the man—did Werner die?"

"Alas! my dear boy, the aim was too true, and my cousin Werner Shenstone fell lifeless and without a struggle in the bottom of the boat. Oh, if in that moment I could have recalled him, if I could have given up my poor, weak, vacillating self, how willingly, how gladly would I have done so; for his was a proud, a noble nature, a self-reliant, strong and commanding one, and I loved him, yes, truly loved him, perhaps for the very reason that I lacked his firmness, his determined mind. I was wild, prostrate with grief when the almost hissing words of Kinmouth sounded in my ear: 'This is a terrible deed, and you must fly for your life. You know that you may trust me. Go away for a time anywhere, only keep me acquainted with your whereabouts, and after this sad affair has become only to be remembered as an accident, as I shall represent it to have been, occurring through his own carelessness in handling his gun, you can return home, feeling sure that your secret is safe with me. I have always had an ambition for travel, and with some assistance from you in a monetary view, I intend, with my young friend here—pointing to the other who had been in the boat—to go to Australia, there to live and die.'"

"While he had been speaking I had remained in a half-dazed condition, not knowing or caring what might become of me and only half heeding the words that Kinmouth had spoken, and was only at last aroused to some sense of reality by the boat touching the shore."

"Rouse yourself, man; this is not a time for dilly dally. Fly, fly at once, leave every thing to me. I will account plausibly for your absence, and after hearing from you, will advise you when to return."

"Well, my dear son, to make this painful story as short as possible, I accepted his proposal, and for six months I was a wanderer, having and taking no pleasure in life, until at last, hearing from Kinmouth that it would be safe to return and that he was anxious to start for Australia, I came back, to find that my cousin's death had been accepted as the result of an accident, and after having secured a certain yearly payment to Kenneth Kinmouth to ensure his silence, he with his friend sailed for Australia, leaving me a prey to my remorse. In the course of a few years I married, and when you were given to us I, to some extent, became a happier man, although my heart has never been without a shadow enshrouding it and calling up the fearful memories of the past. I had only one visit in all the years until this one from Kinmouth, and then he told me that he had been married, had lost his wife, and asked me to provide a home for his daughter, his little Jessie, whom he had brought with him. I was bound to this man and could refuse him nothing; your mother never knew that it was his daughter. I consented, and she has been treated as one of ourselves."

"You know the rest. He claims that I insist, upon pain of exposure, to your marriage with Jessie, and you, my noble boy, have promised that you will save your father."

Serle Shenstone's eyes filled again, and the large teardrops coursed down his agonized face.

"My dear father," cried Mark, "I have listened to your story patiently and with deep thought. I have promised my answer to-morrow. I shall keep my word. I must leave you now be of good heart, I think I see a glimmer of light shining through all this darkness."

"Heaven help you, my son. See your mother before you go, and ease her poor breaking heart."

"Send her here to me, and let Rufus White know that I want to see him in an hour," said Mark.

After a loving and consoling talk with his mother, Rufus White made his appearance.

"Ah, Mister Mark, and how goes on the wounded limb?"

"Nicely, good Rufe; but I have other things to think about just now—and you must help me. Hurry to the wizard. I must see him, this night you must bring him to me; tell him it is life and death—"

"All right, Mister Mark, you may depend upon old Rufe."

"I know it, my friend. Speed away and come not back without him."

While Rufus is sent upon his master's errand we will return for a brief space to two other personages in our history, viz. Kenneth Kinmouth and old Marjorie.

They had met as they had appointed, and the first salutation had been from old Marjorie.

"Well," she said, "I have kept my promise; have you kept yours? Have you brought the drug?"

"Yes, my Heavens. Kenneth Kinmouth never fails where he has an object in view. You hate the wizard, your master, so do I, see that he takes this to-night, and he will never trouble us again; you hear, mind no faltering, no blundering."

The wind had risen and a storm was threatening, the clouds were overcast, and at intervals a lurid flash of lightning made all around as clear as day.

The two conspirators had met on the beach, close to an overhanging rock, under whose friendly shelter our old friend Rufus White had taken refuge from the coming storm.

Every word they spoke could be distinctly heard by him, and, having no especial liking for either of them, he did not make his presence known.

"The drug is an all-powerful one," said Kinmouth, "and once taken all the skill in the world cannot save from its effects, so be careful, Marjorie. It is tasteless, and you must find the opportunity to convey it in his potions to-night. Another day may destroy all my hopes."

With these instructions Kinmouth bade Marjorie a hasty good-night and took his way back to the manor.

"So!" said Rufus, "I must not wait for the storm; perhaps I may save a life. Those plotting fiends shall not have their way if old Rufe can help it. I don't like the look of either of them."

And so saying he made his exit from the friendly shelter, and took the way to the cottage of the wizard.

He was fortunate enough to meet him on the threshold of the door, and, telling him that he had an important message from Master Mark, was instantly conducted to a private room in the dwelling.

In two hours' time the wizard was seated by the side of the lounge on which Mark lay.

"My dear boy," he said, after having heard the

whole story, "all shall yet be well. I have power to do more than you think, and I am come prepared to act. Your suspicions after hearing your father's recital were correct. Summon them to the room—all; Kenneth Kinmonth above all. Through the interposition of a Providence, I have been saved from death this night, and Kenneth Kinmonth shall not go unwhipped of justice. Your servant, Rufus White, disclosed to me a conspiracy which he had overheard to poison me. I see why—I see it all."

He had risen as he spoke, and, going to the bell, rung it loudly.

Upon a servant appearing Mark said:

"Request my father and mother to come here. Is Mr. Kinmonth in the house?"

"Yes, sir," replied the servant. "He came in about an hour since."

"Tell him also that I desire his attendance for a short time, and when I ring the bell again I wish that all of my father's servants shall assemble here. I desire them as witnesses."

The servant withdrew, evidently in amaze and wonder at what was going to happen.

In a few minutes Mr. and Mrs. Shenstone entered, and the latter, looking askance at the wizard, went to the side of her son.

"My dear Mark, who is this gentleman? What does all this mystery mean?"

"Patience, mother, and you will know all. We are waiting for Mr. Kinmonth."

Presently he entered, and was about to make some rude demand as to why he was called for when his eye caught sight of the wizard and the words he would have uttered died upon his tongue.

The wizard here rose, and his grand figure was erect, and, walking up to and taking the hand of Mrs. Shenstone and conducting her to a chair by Mark's side, he said:

"My friends, I am come here to relieve a long suffering man of a remorse that he should never have felt. Mine should have been the blame."

The wizard here rang the bell a second time, when all the servants entered the room.

"The cloud that has hitherto hung over the life of Serle Shenstone, I will remove. Serle," he said, in tremulous tones, "forgive me for having allowed you to be a prey to grief, which I know now has been yours, but which I thought once you did not feel. Serle, do you not know me? I am Werner Shenstone, your cousin—not dead, as that man has led you to suppose, and as I, by my silence, have led you to believe. There is no stain of blood upon your hands. Henceforth, hold up your head and live happily, for the sake of your wife and your noble son," he said, as he threw off the disguise and revealed the presence of a noble man.

Words cannot describe the almost ethereal light that shone in the eyes of Mrs. Shenstone, as embracing her husband, who had sunk utterly bewildered into a chair, she whispered:

"My darling, I never doubted you."

And here, dear reader, on this scene of happiness we will draw the curtain, dealing as they deserve with the other characters in our history.

Kenneth Kinmonth was permitted to go unmolested, upon his promise that he would leave at once for Australia, which promise he was glad to make, after finding that his attempt to poison had been found out; and Jessie, unfortunate in her love and with her proud nature, determined to accompany her father.

Old Marjorie begged forgiveness, declaring that she never intended to administer the fatal dose, but that she meant to have confessed all.

Her statement was accepted as truth, and she was not only pardoned, but retained as a servant, and by her faithfulness proved that the confidence placed in her had not been placed in vain.

One word more and we have done. Oriole, the peerless, the beautiful bird, what of her?

Mark by careful nursing, soon recovered the use of his limb, and after gaining from Oriole the confession that he was beloved, it was not a difficult matter to gain the consent of her father, in fact it met with his full approval.

He gave them the cottage on the island, and Mark called it his Oriole's, his birdie's, home.

Serle and Werner Shenstone are as brothers, co-inheritors, not only of the estates, but of the love and affection of all around them, and Rufus White often chuckles to himself and says that it was partly with his assistance and information that they had solved the Island Mystery.

THE END.

IMPROVEMENTS in the old town of Edinburgh are sweeping away many houses of interest. One of these is a house in General's Entry, Potterrow, in which at one time resided Mrs. Maclellan, the "Clarinda" who touched the susceptible heart of the poet Burns, and with whom, under the name of "Sylvander," he exchanged so many glowing letters.

"Clarinda" resided in the first floor, the whole accommodation of her house consisting of a kitchen, bedroom, and parlour, where the visits of the poet were received, and which is still known as "Burns's Room." The house is to be demolished to make way a new one.

BESSIE'S BAD HABIT, AND HOW SHE CURED IT.

"Oh, dear, there it is again, Bessie, come and put away your thimble and scissors; and I said yesterday that I would try to take better care of my things. I do think it is a shame if Bessie Melville, eleven years and a half old, cannot make herself pick up her things and put them in their places. I can; there, now! I know I can, if I really try."

"But dare I say I will? Let me think. If I say I will, why then I shall have to, some way: there's the trouble. If I really promise, why I must do it, you know; and how shall I go to work not to forget just as I always do? Oh, now I know! I will just punish myself every time I leave anything out of place."

"Dear me! what lots of punishment I shall have; but then just think what lots of punishment I have now. If I look at them as such; for what numbers of things I lose by my carelessness; and then the scoldings I get. I am sure I would rather punish myself a good many times than have lost my little knife, which I suppose I left at school, or somewhere; and then there was that nice little portmanteau that auntie gave me, I left on the seat in the train; and my Christmas doll, that I left in the summerhouse all night when it rained, and almost ruined it; and ever and ever so many more."

"Yes, I will do it! There, I have promised; and now, Bessie, you know when you promise anything you must do it. But how shall I go to work to make myself remember? Let me see. In the first place, I will write it down and put it right here by my bed, and read it every morning."

She got some paper and wrote:

"I Bessie Melville, do here promise that I will not stop trying till I have cured myself of leaving my things about, and any time I do leave anything I will in some way punish myself."

Having fastened this up where she would be sure to see it every time she went to her room, she quietly knelt down, and earnestly asked to be helped in her effort to break herself of her bad habit of leaving things wherever she happened to be using them.

When she rose from her knees she sat down to resolve on some plan to make herself orderly.

You have seen by this time that Bessie was very much given to talking to herself. "Talking with Bessie Melville," she called it.

"Now, Bessie," she said, "you must make your plan and rules. Let me see. Every time you leave anything out of place you shall go without something you like, or do something you don't like; and the more careless you are the harder must you punish yourself. Remember, you have begun now, so just put your pencil where it belongs, and pick up those pins on the table. There, quick, now, for mother's calling!" and away she ran, as happy as a wild bird.

Bessie Melville was a merry, pleasant child, quick to learn, bright and loving but so careless and untidy as to make herself and all her friends a great deal of trouble.

Often had her mother talked to her, and many ways had she tried to make her orderly, but seemingly all in vain.

"Now," said Bessie, as she ran downstairs, "I will not tell mother, for I fear I shall not succeed very soon. I will just wait and see how long it will be before she will see that I am improving."

It was the third day after Bessie's resolve that we heard her saying:

"Oh, dear!" as her quick glance saw an apron on a chair, and a pair of shoes on the floor, on entering her room, after dinner.

"Now, Miss Bessie, what shall I do to you? Look at these things and such a nice place as you have got to put your things in! Let me see"—glancing at her paper—"go without something I like, or do something I don't like. I was going to walk, and in town too. Now I do like to wear new shoes, and I don't like to wear shabby ones; but new shoes must not go walking when they lie on the bedroom floor all day; so, Miss Bessie, you will put them up after this. Well, I did keep everything in its place two whole days, and that is something, but"—looking sorrowfully at her feet—"I wonder how many times I shall have to wear these shoes up to town."

Thus did Bessie punish herself, as she called it, and thus earnestly did she try to conquer her bad habits.

Sometimes she would say:

"I wonder if mamma doesn't see any improvement? She surely doesn't have to tell me nearly so often to put up things."

Let us pass over six months, and look into Bessie's room on the morning of her birthday, and see if she is still trying.

It is early, but this bright September morning finds Bessie wide awake.

A birthday comes but once a year, and she cannot afford to sleep after daylight.

"Twelve years old, Bessie," she says. "I wonder what my birthday presents will be. It must be most breakfast time. Let me see; I am all ready! Yes, everything is in its place. I really believe I might take that paper down, for I have not had to punish myself for as long as a month; but perhaps I had better leave it to make me sure not to forget. Every morning for six months now I have read it. Well it won't hurt me to read it for one year more, so I will leave it till another birthday. How many times I used to say 'I can't always think to put up things'; I believe I'll never say 'can't' any more. There's the bell. Now we'll see what the presents are."

On her plate Bessie sees a nice little pile, covered with a napkin.

Soon the little fingers have taken off the cover, and her eyes and feet are dancing to the music of her glad words as she eagerly examines her treasures.

There was a gold chain from mamma; a little locket, with his own picture from papa; a knife, much handsomer than the lost one, from brother Harry; and, under all, a nice book.

Bessie looked in to see who gave it, and read on the first leaf:

"To Bessie, from mamma, as a token that she has seen and appreciated her efforts to overcome her bad habits and be an orderly little girl."

"Oh, mamma!" said Bessie, "you did see, then, that I was trying?"

"Who could help seeing?" said mamma, "when for two months I have never found a thing out of place that you have used, not even your chair left in the middle of the floor?"

"Oh, those chairs!" sighed Bessie, "you can't think how many times I had to punish myself before I could remember that they did not belong anywhere."

"Oh! you dear, nice book, you!" said she, beginning to dance again, "just to think I have got you all because I have made up my mind to cure myself of that bad, naughty habit, and I thought all the time that mamma did not see that I was doing better, and was almost discouraged sometimes. I am sure I will never go back to that bad habit again."

But here, on her happy birthday, we will leave Bessie, hoping that any little girl who may read this will try as hard as Bessie did to overcome her bad habits be they what they may. A. D.

SCIENCE.

THE WRECK OF AN AIR SHIP.—The Schroeder air ship, which, according to the inventor's claims, was going to carry fast mails between the principal cities of America and which subsequently would fly across the Atlantic in some incredibly short space of time, came to an unfortunate end recently. The machine, nearly finished, was carelessly left in an exposed situation overnight, on a common in Baltimore. A strong gale arising tore it from its fastenings and converted it into a useless and shapeless mass of broken boards and wicker-work.

A BOILING LAKE.—The discovery of a boiling lake in the island of Dominica has excited much scientific interest, and investigations of the phenomenon are to be made by geologists. It appears that a company exploring the steep and forest-covered mountains behind the town of Roseau came upon the boiling lake, about 2,500 feet above the sea level, and two miles in circumference. On the wind clearing away for a moment the clouds of sulphurous steam with which the lake was covered, a mound of water was seen ten feet higher than the general level of the surface, caused by ebullition. The margin of the lake consists of beds of sulphur, and its overflow found exit by a waterfall of great height.

THE MOON.—It has been satisfactorily determined that there are mountains in the moon. Although that planet is 230,000 miles from this, telescopes and the labours of learned men have introduced us to some extensive knowledge of its physical character. When looked at with the naked eye, it is easy to see that the inner circle presents an extremely ragged line, while the outer line is extremely smooth. When we examine this inner edge with a strong telescope, we find a great number of luminous points, which grow larger as the sun bears upon their locality. Behind these spots a deep shade is cast, which always

moves so as to be in opposition to the sun. Those bright spots are the summits of high mountains on which the sun shines before it reaches the lower parts; the deep shade is the shadow of the mountain casts, and is always found to be in exact proportion, as to length, with the mountain, when the inclination of the sun's rays is taken into account. From measurements made of the length of these shadows, the height of the highest of these mountains may be calculated. It will readily be understood that the length of a shadow indicates the height of a body behind which it is cast, provided the inclination by which the light falls is known. Whenever the light falls on a perpendicular body, with an inclination of half a right angle, the shadow formed beyond is exactly as long as the body is high. When the sun shines by this inclination upon the lunar mountains, their shadows are consequently as long as the mountain are tall. When the light falls with a greater inclination, the shadow is lengthened in a ratio that is known to the mathematician.

TO OBTAIN A BROWN PATINA ON ZINC.—A solution of molybdic acid, or molybdate of ammonia, in very dilute aqua regia, or a solution of molybdic acid in excess of very dilute caustic soda, produces, according to Kletzinaky, a very useful patina bath for articles of cast zinc. Zinc statues or other ornamental articles, when dipped into this bath become covered with a very pleasing brown patina showing the prismatic colours. This covering is nothing but a thin film of oxide of molybdenum, which exhibits polarisation colours and adheres firmly to the metallic zinc.

ELECTRICITY AND RAILWAYS.

MR. W. H. PRECEE, M. Inst. C.E., Postal Engineer, in a recent discourse on this subject stated that he had to establish three propositions—1st, that railway travelling is dangerous; 2nd, that it is safe; and, 3rd, that the danger is potential and the safety actual, the one having been converted into the other by the operations of scientific thought and by the applications of scientific skill.

The first proposition is self-evident, considering all the contingencies; yet the safety of railways is also manifested when we compare the number of accidents upon them with those due to other causes.

The average annual amount of deaths of railway passengers in the four years 1871-4 was 145, of which 104 were due to causes within their own control. In 1873, 17,246 persons met violent deaths, averaging 750 per million. Of these 1,290 were due to railways, 990 to mining, 6,070 to other mechanical causes; 3,239 were drowned, 1,519 were killed by horses or conveyances, 1132 by machinery of various kinds; the rest by falls, burns, suffocation, and other events to which we are liable daily. The proportion of passengers killed in three years ending 1849 was 1 in 4,782,188 journeys; and in three years ending in 1878—90,089,660. Hence, said Mr. Precee, in a relative sense we may consider railway travelling safe.

Proceeding to the way in which the potentiality of danger is converted into the actuality of safety, he stated that 18 per cent. of the accidents are due to defective permanent way, 13 per cent. to defective rolling-stock, 28 per cent. to defective signals, and 41 per cent. to defective human machinery.

The comparative safety of railway travelling has been produced by experience, and by applying the means suggested by scientific thought and inventive skill to remedy defects. Telegraphy is the chief aid of the railway engineer. The signal by day being the arm, which at right angles signifies danger, at an angle of 45 degrees safety; the signals at night being lights, the rule being

White means right; red means wrong;

Green means slowly go along.

These are supplemented by fog-signal in thick weather—flags, whistles, and other methods of giving rapid information.

The greatest element of safety, however, is the "block system," which arose out of the multiplication of the trains and increased speed. In the "time system" the danger-signal is exhibited five minutes after the departure of a train, and the caution-signal five minutes more. The safety of the train is entirely under the responsibility of the driver, and the system is brimful of danger. By the "absolute block system," which is effectually carried out by electricity, before a train is allowed to leave a station A, the line at B is blocked in advance, and when it leaves A it is blocked behind at A; so that it is thoroughly protected in both directions.

The "permissive" system, Mr. Precee said, is doubtless an improvement on the "time" system, but is really not the "block" system at all, which ought not to be rashly condemned for its occasional defective working.

Besides illustrating his remarks by experiments, he speaker explained the working of the electric

repeaters—one of the greatest elements of safety; and also exhibited an effective method of communicating between passenger and guard by means of electricity.

In conclusion, he said that science cannot be devoted to a nobler purpose than to the protection of human life; and the records of experience show that it has earned well-deserved laurels in rendering the dangers of railway travelling potential and the safety actual. The block systems used on the South-Eastern, Great Western, and Great Northern railways, and also Mr. Tyer's block telegraph and electric-looking systems, were exhibited at work the same time.

THE TAIL OF A COMET.

BRIEFLY, the tail of a comet is the light projected by its nucleus upon that portion of its hazy envelope which lies in the shadow cast by that nucleus when near enough to the sun to cast a shadow. The ordinary observer can prove the correctness of this statement by means of two lamps, differing only in size; while the more profound investigator can satisfy himself beyond question through the mystery of the photometer and suitably prepared lights, the one consisting of an incandescent solid having a gaseous envelope to represent the sun, while the other or less light is of a similar nature, with the addition of one or more outer envelopes exceedingly attenuated. By using suitable lamps a multitude of spectators can be convinced of the truth of the theory on any misty or foggy night if one lamp be moved about the other in an elliptical path; indeed the proof is so simple that I have never failed to convince the spectators by using two ordinary lamps.

Comets are originated whenever any sun by eruption ejects portions of its substance directly outward at a speed sufficient to overcome the attractive force of that sun's gravity. In the case of our sun, a speed of 380 miles per second is sufficient for the purpose.

The expelled mass flies outward into space, still under the influence of the sun's gravity, as the sun is the largest near object, and all matter is subject to gravity; and as the sun's outward course changes its position, it also causes the comet's course to deviate from a straight line, because it is constantly pulled aside by the sun. This deviation continues until the comet's course becomes momentarily parallel with the sun's course, after which it gradually curves toward the sun, the entire path of its movement being an ellipse, constantly approximating to a spiral circle.

The comet's fiery mass having been projected as a fragment from a body revolving upon an axis, it also has an axial motion in conformity with a universal law, which also assists to convert its bulk into a spherical shape, as its own gravity acts upon its mass to concentrate it toward its centre. Thus, in time, its mass comes to consist of a fiery nucleus, with various spherical envelopes of gaseous material, more or less separated from each other by gravity.

Its matter being extremely attenuated, its bulk may be immense, while its weight is relatively small. It has an axial and an orbital motion. In this condition, it is observed by a spectator as a bright speck in space, which rapidly enlarges under continued observation as it approaches, its fiery nucleus illuminating its hazy envelope like a lamp in a globe, the whole revolving on its axis as a immense sphere of attenuated matter, perhaps 180,000,000 miles in diameter.

As it approaches nearer, still revolving, it apparently increases, but less rapidly, in size, and as it gradually meets the increasing light of the sun, its own spherical glow, conquered by a superior light, gradually pales on the side nearer the sun, and it accordingly shows a tail of perhaps 90,000,000 miles (or half its diameter) in length in the solar shadow which its nucleus casts and illuminates, that being the only portion of its huge envelope which the eye is permitted to distinguish under the conquering influence of the sun's light.

When still nearer, its head and its apparent tail become more defined, and if the conditions of the comet's envelopes permit, the appearance of more than one tail may be observed; this tail or illuminated shadow, obeying the known laws of light, being projected as nearly in a direct line from the sun—that is, it forms a slight curve, because each ray of light reaches the observer from the point of its emanation and not from the farther point which the comet occupies at the instant of observation, as the comet has moved constantly from the exact point of light emanation during the time required for the light itself to reach the observer.

As the comet nears the sun and swings round it, its apparent tail swings too, that is, the illuminated shadow swings with terrific velocity but with no exertion of force, repulsive or otherwise, as far as the shadow is concerned, and as the comet leaves the sun its shadow necessarily goes before it and is as necessarily illuminated as that portion of fog

lying in the path of a locomotive headlight moving away from a house on fire.

As the comet flies away its spectacular phenomena are rapidly reversed, its apparent tail fades, and the luminous glow of its sphere expands and then diminishes to a more disappearing speck of light. When, after many circuits, its elliptical orbit gradually becomes a spiral circle, and itself becomes a planet of more or less dignity, its apparent tail disappears by absorption of its attenuated gaseous envelope, which settles on its nucleus by gravity; and its possible apparent tail becomes too short for observation.

Thus the true answer to the astronomical conundrum: "What is the tail of a comet?" is: "It has none," and this insignificant result is a good and sufficient cause for my inactivity in heralding the fact, which was known to me at a much earlier date.

C. M.

A PROBLEM.

If it were possible to read hearts aright, straight to the very core, would we love the world better than we do now, or would we fly from it as did Timon of Athens. It is a problem that I cannot solve.

Long ago some kindly singer wrote:

"If every pain and care we feel

Were written on the brow,

How many a hand would pause to heal,

That only wounds us now."

And years ago, too, Fanny Fern in quoting it said: "Fahaw! Write your brow with anything but your troubles."

Which was right? I don't know. I never shall. The mystery of this world is its great discomfort. You really know no one. To judge by expression is your first delusion, until you discover that some people have no expression whatever. They smile or they frown as they please.

What can you do after this? Judge by manner? Why, the hatefulest things that ever have been said to me were said with the shark's grin of society. The bitterest pills have been handed to me in gilt paper, with a bow. Can you say what you feel to one who takes such care that you shall not be able to base your feeling on any tangible thing? No, indeed, you can't allow yourself to feel. Perhaps you are doing an injustice. That wasn't a scratch; it was a velvet paw. The pill which pretends to be a sugar-plum must be called one as it is swallowed.

Shall we be suspicious, and call good people rascals or idiots? or trust all, only to be deceived? Sally leaves "the nice-spoken gentleman who comes from India, and went to school with master—to write a note to him in the parlour," and he goes off with the hals.

After that, judge by appearances, will you? Such a cruel, cold world, and people starving to death, and yet how much charity there is! Such a thankless world, and yet there is gratitude that brings tears to your eyes. A fickle world, dead to true love and constancy, you say sometimes, and then pause and blush with shame, for, oh! the true and tender lovers you have known—the fond parents, and affectionate children.

It is so bad, and yet so good—this world of ours. If we could only utter blank truths, veil nothing, show all our hearts, all our lives, would it be better to us? I only ask the question. I never hope to answer it. It is but a masked ball to me. I don't know many of the dancers under their disguises. The fool's cap and bells may crown a sage, or the king may take his crown off, and prove a lackey. When you have pulled away one mask that was all purity, and have found Satan's face beneath, you are apt to doubt. But it is only doubting; you are never sure. You may cruelly misjudge this one, and foolishly trust another; and if you do not want more enemies that you can master, you must ask no questions. You'll never know the world.

M. K. D.

SAVING MATCHES.

"THIS is the second match I have picked up in this house to-day," said Paul Yardley, with considerable severity in his tone. "It is a very bad sign, indeed, Matilda, with regard to our prosperity. If one is not saving in these small matters, no matter how large the income is, one can never get on in life. I have often spoken of having one of those mantel-vases filled with lamp-lighters, so we need not use so many matches; but, for some reason, I never get these things attended to. I am sorry to say it, Matilda, but we are running behind in our affairs, and I must be allowed to repeat a remark I heard a man make yesterday: 'A man must ask his wife's leave to thrive.'"

So saying, Paul lighted his cigar with the air of a man who has discharged a weighty duty. He felt that he had administered a very fitting rebuke to

his wife's wastefulness, and he walked away to his shop completely satisfied with himself.

Matilda went about her accustomed duties with a slightly depressed air, as Aunt Sylvia could not help observing.

Aunt Sylvia was making a visit at the house of her nephew, and could not help taking mental notes of much that went on around her.

She was Paul's mother's sister, and had tried to do her duty by the boy when he was growing up, but she felt that somehow she had missed a point or two.

She quietly resolved that she would do her best to supplement former deficiencies before she went home.

She would open Paul's eyes a little, so that he might take a juster view of himself and his wife, if it were in her power to do it.

Not being any of his "wife's relations," it was easier for her to speak out.

Besides, she had a few thousands to leave to somebody, and that gave weight to her opinions among all her nephews and nieces, not to speak of their parents.

So it happened, on that rainy evening, as Matilda was hushing the baby to sleep in the nursery, that Aunt Sylvia took occasion to have a little talk with Paul.

"So business does not go exactly to your mind, these times, Paul," she remarked.

"Why, no, auntie, not quite. We ought to make another payment on our house next month, of twenty-five pounds, but I can't raise five pounds."

"What's the trouble?"

"Business is dull, and it costs a great deal to keep house. I am not sure but lodgings would be cheaper. I don't think Matilda understands saving quite as well as she ought. She does not mean to be wasteful, of course. But little leaks sink a ship, you know."

"Just like every man since Adam's time," said Aunt Sylvia, a little tartly. "Always ready to throw the blame on a woman. Now, I have been in your house above a week, and I am of the opinion that Matilda is a much more saving, prudent wife than you deserve."

"You always were hard on me, Aunt Sylvia," said Paul, in an injured tone.

"None too hard for your good, Paul. If Matilda was a little more self-asserting and less patient with you it would be to your advantage. I blame her for putting up with what you said, this morning, about that match. She should have spoken her mind to you plainly. Paul, how many matches do you suppose one cigar would buy? Hundreds. Thus, every time you smoke a cigar you waste, in reality, hundreds of matches. If Matilda struck off a whole box to light her fire it would not begin to compare with your wastefulness. I know you do not smoke less than three cigars a day. That is enough to keep your wife in matches for weeks, if not for months."

"Now, paper-lighters," she continued, "are all very well when you have children to make them. But a busy housekeeper's time is too valuable for such work. You remember the old proverb about saving at the spit. You would have your wife continually on the look-out about those infinitesimal economies, which save nothing, while you squander pounds on trifles that you could better do without."

"The loss of a day to your business is another great waste. How many weeks pass without a holiday of some sort? Last week it was a journey by the rail, which cost you twelve shillings fare, and I don't know how much for dinner. This week, you know, you hired a horse to go, with a friend, into the country, to see his new place. When has Matilda taken even half a day's holiday?"

"But a woman's place is at home, auntie," said Paul, rather vexed at being cornered.

"And a man's place is at his business. It cannot go on, all the same, when he is away from it; that is, if he has any ability worth speaking of. Come, Paul, you must learn to be more reasonable, or I shall have cause to be ashamed of my share in your bringing up. Drop this habit of looking out for notes in your wife's eyes, and consider the beam in your own eye. So distinctly understand, my boy," said Aunt Sylvia, with her decided shake of the chin, which Paul knew so well, "not a penny of mine ever goes for cigar-money, or livery-stable debts, except it is to take wife and child out for a drive. I am quite willing to have you call on me for that supply once a week. I expressly stipulate that the customary cheque which I send down on Christmas is to be spent to the last penny on Matilda herself; and I am to have the privilege of looking over her account-book, with due items noted, when I come again."

"She will not have the slightest objections, and it will serve as a check to your teasing it all away from her. You see I don't forget how you used to tease your old auntie in former years; and I must

try to make amends to your wife for spoiling her so badly."

The sound of a weary little foot on the stair put a stop to farther conversation, and presently Matilda entered, and, with all haste, brought down the sewing-basket in an absent way, and forthwith was immersed in its contents.

Her fingers were nimble, in spite of the day's hard work, and mended garments were laid out, neatly folded on the table, one after another, in a way that astonished Paul's newly-opened eyes.

To think that she must work on and on for hours, after his work was over, and he never had thought about it before! And he had been calling her wasteful, and all that, in return.

"I am an awful scamp, auntie," he said, suddenly, as he arose and picked up the basket, and set it back on the shelf, while Matilda followed him with bewildered eyes.

Auntie nodded approvingly, and Matilda inquired if Paul had gone crazy.

"No, dear. I am just coming to my right mind. No more work after this time of night, or I shall feel compelled to lose your thumb."

"I am afraid your toes will be cold this winter, if I don't; not to speak of poor little Frankie's."

"Fact is, dear, I am going to turn over a new leaf. I shall smoke fewer cigars, and with what I save, buy new socks for baby and all of us. You shan't wear your life out mending these old things. You must work less, and take more recreation. Auntie, here, has been giving me such a dressing down as I haven't had since I was ten years old. Come, play me an old tune, dear, and show that you have forgiven me for being such an old bear."

Wise old auntie slipped away to write a letter she wished to post in the morning, and gave the two their bright sitting-room all to themselves. It was the first of many bright evenings; and the two had never reason to regret the fortnight's visit from good Aunt Sylvia.

LURED AND LOST.

CHAPTER XIII.

TOWARD morning a woman, thickly veiled, stepped into the train at the lake. She was alone and carried nothing in her hands.

St. Cloud had run off to find false Richard Hazard and warn him of his wife.

Irrational through grief, she had rushed from her detested husband's roof to guard the life of her perfidious lover, while her old guardian secretly slept unwittingly of her madness.

She had the address wrung from the wounded man safely hidden in her bosom, she carried a full purse, she wore a heavy lace veil, and she mocked at danger to herself as long as he whom she deathlessly adored was menaced by treachery.

On rushed the train, hurrying toward the undreamed-of goal.

The smoky lamps cast a sickly glimmer over the passengers.

There were men with their shoulders touching their ears asleep like hedgehogs, and ladies languid and haggard, trying to balance their heads on the shivering seat-backs, to sleep through the long night-journey.

A great many stations were passed, and then something happened.

The door which was behind St. Cloud opened and shut with the inevitable slam, and two passengers walked behind her, looking for the seats which had been denied them in the other carriages.

There was some settling and cramming; two well-dressed youths not far off had to draw in their legs from the seats before them and to hold a large bird-cage, with a sleepy linnet in it, and a glass case of wax flowers in their arms to accommodate the newcomers, so that much grumbling was the result.

A vicious voice ran through St. Cloud like a knife as it exclaimed:

"Bless my heart, young man, you can't expect to occupy two seats for one fare!"

"An insufferable nuisance!" said a twin voice.

St. Cloud sat bolt upright, gasping, with fear, and stared at her Aunt Becky making a comfortable nest for herself with shawls and Cousin Corny wrangling with the well-dressed youths about the sharp corners of the bird-cage as they snuck in his back.

Poor runaway bride! She grew cold and sick with horror, for she thought the infamous pair had discovered her, and were bound to have her in their clutches again.

She jumped up and staggered to the door of the carriage, with the frantic idea of leaping out of the train, but the dizzy rush of the ground, yet indis-

tinctly visible in the dawn, appalled her, and she sank down again, helpless.

Her wild movement did not attract their eyes, though it did attract several strangers, and a kind lady handed her a vinaigrette, with a nod and smile of pity, for she thought the young lady was going to faint.

So St. Cloud cowered down in her seat and hoped they knew nothing about her proximity.

Presently the guard came round for the tickets; he snipped some, looked at others, and put others in his pocket.

St. Cloud strained her eyes as he took from Cousin Corny his twin pieces of cardboard and looked at them under the lamp.

The first opportunity that presented itself she eagerly seized and managed to escape furtively from the carriage that contained her tormentors and secure a place in another.

"Humph! to Threford; through ticket; all right," said he, tearing a piece off each and handing them back.

"Threford!" gasped the listener, and a ghastly terror seized her. "They are going to Richard!"

Then she watched the guard coming nearer in fascinated fear.

Would he take her ticket as he had done theirs, and read off in a loud voice, "To Threford; through ticket; all right"? thus betraying her to the vultures who were hurrying on to destroy her beloved?

Blanching to the lips, she pressed it into his hand; but he only snipped his share off it, glanced at her, nodded at the ventilator beside her, and passed on.

Then St. Cloud drew her veil down over her face, covered down, and disappeared from view altogether.

They were all three travelling on together to Threford, that pretty town to which Gerald Travers had carried his mystic bride.

Two vultures, birds of rapine, and a trembling dove, messenger of peace!

Oh, to reach him first and warn him of their coming!

Daylight was filling the air and revealing all faces; at any moment one or the other might turn round and recognize her, despite her veil and shrouding shawl.

Through all the variations of the long, dreadful day she remained a prey to the most urgent anxiety, and enduring the tortures of Tophet at every station lest Cousin Corny might suspect in her to reconnoitre and lay his talons on her shoulder with a creak of triumph.

Hunger too and thirst intolerable she endured, for she dared not go out to the restaurant with the other passengers lest she might find herself standing at the marble semicircle between her relatives; and she had no courtly escort to stand out for a cup of tea for her.

Indeed there is no knowing but she would have died of fever and fatigue if the guard had not at length become interested in her—as who that had eyes could help being?—and insisted on bringing her hot tea and muffins from the very next refreshment-room, and waited on her like a born gentleman.

In the falling of the evening as they passed for three minutes at a hamlet, she was cooling her face at the open window in the gentle breeze. Some one sauntered past on the platform, almost brushing her hands which lay languidly upon the sill; she looked up and her eyes were terrified by a sight of the long, lean visage of Corny.

She flung herself back violently, but the very abruptness of the movement sent his ferret eyes peering eagerly after her.

He saw a wild, pale face one moment disclosed, the next hidden by two sunny hands, and a cry of consternation escaped him.

"By Jingo! it's the girl!" ejaculated he.

The engine gave a snort, the train glided on.

She saw her enemy prepare to spring on the steps as it passed him, and she knew that in a trice he would have found his way to her.

She rushed out at the opposite end of the carriage, and found the guard standing there.

"Oh, sir, what shall I do? I want to get off the train!" cried she, distractedly.

"Want to get off the train, miss?" reiterated he, in astonishment. "Bless my soul! you can't now; why didn't you get off just now?"

"I must"—wringing her hands crazily—"they've discovered me, and oh! I must get away!"

"Jinny! I'd like to help you miss, but Lord Harry! how can I? We don't stop till we get to Threford."

"Can't you hide me somewhere?" she groaned, looking up in his face in anguish.

He stared at her in wonder.

"Would you be afraid to stand on the engine?" he asked, in desperation.

"No, I'll go anywhere."

She thrust a sovereign into his hand, but he did not need that to quicken his zeal.

He helped her into the smoking carriage, where curious young men stared after her through clouds of smoke; through the baggage vans, and then a cattle truck blocked the way.

Seeing the narrow platform along which she must pass with the flying wheels beneath, a terror seized her, and she clung to the guard, crying:

"I can't go there, I can't go there!"

"Don't like to try, miss?"

"No! see how I tremble! I should get dizzy and fall off."

"You would so if you're frightened. Well, we'll try the other plan. I think I can do it."

"What plan?"

"See that long bridge just round the bend? We go slower over that. I'll signal the driver, and he'll go extra slow. You'll take my hand, miss, and you'll stand on the step, and just when we're slowest, I'll give you a swing forward—so—and you'll land feet foremost on the bank, clear of the wheels; and you stand like a brick, and don't be alarmed, and we'll leave you behind, sure enough."

"Oh, heavens, how fearful! but I'll try it."

"Here goes, then," he signalled to the engine-driver. "Give us your hand now—steady—sway to lose you—good luck to you—now, miss—now!"

A swift whirl into the air—a tremendous shock—it was done successfully as a sure eye and a strong arm could do it.

The roar of the monster as it thundered almost over her, the flash of hundreds of ghastly faces looking at her, and St. Cloud was left lying stunned upon the bank as with quickened pulse the train hurried onward on its way.

CHAPTER XIV.

ST. CLOUD was left in the heart of a wild tract of country, great forests on every side, a swollen tributary of the river beneath him, and an road to be seen save the long, serpentine railway, with its dull iron gleaming in the last ray of daylight. Night closed at hand and her destination many miles away, she resolved to follow the vanished train until she came upon a carriage road, and she stumbled dizzily forward.

Her limbs were so cramped by her long imprisonment that she could at first make little headway, but as the dusk grew deeper, and the deep wood sighed, nameless alarms hastened her footsteps and urged her on panting. How awful to be overtaken by night in that dread solitude!

She heard strange, harsh cries from night-birds wailing circling round her, and mysterious thunderings from unseen, rock-bound torrents; and shadowy forms of savage beasts darted across the track, and scrambled up the bank to glare with red eyes at her as she ran past; and whenever she came to a tunnel scooped out of the rock she would fly through it in frantic haste, for the idea of a line of carriages tearing after her at the rate of forty miles an hour, and crushing her against the wall, added wings to her feet.

Mile after mile the poor girl pursued her flight, while the night fell darkly and her strength ebbed fast. She was thinking that she must surely lay herself down beneath the bank and tremble to death, when something gleefully white, like the skeleton arm of a dead giant, loomed into view.

At first she stood still with a gasp of choking dismay, but soon recognising it as the white-washed signal-post of a crossing, she ran joyfully up to it, and threw herself down to rest.

Here she sat on a flat stone, recovering her breath, and looking up and down the narrow, rocky turnpike for perhaps half an hour.

Then she heard the thunder of an approaching vehicle upon the road, and she advanced to the edge of it, where she hoped she would be able to stop it and ask her way.

First came four piebald horses, galloping tumultuously down the rocky defile; then a high, eccentric car with one seat in it, and behind that a huge covered van attached by heavy chains to the car.

From the van as the cortège approached a deep growl issued which curdled the blood in her veins.

As she sprang up the bank in dismay, looking back over her shoulder, the driver, standing tall and stately as Phæton in his golden car, caught sight of the shadowy figure, looked and looked again, tightened the reins in a giant grasp, and brought his horses upon their haunches.

"What the fury's here?" he demanded lazily.

St. Cloud stood still, transfixed and mute.

"Ghost or devil, come here!" and a roar from the van behind seemed to add menace to the growling voice.

"Oh, sir! what's that?" she breathlessly cried.

"A female!" muttered Phæton; "bad luck to 'em!"

Where are you going to all by yourself, young woman?"

And, dinging the reins over the dashboard, he swung himself down to the ground and slowly approached her.

"To—th—Threxford," faltered St. Cloud, quailing at this promising.

"Ho! ho! ho! what, on foot! Thirty miles on them feet!" impudently drawing his whip handle across her skirts to disclose the small dainty members in question.

"Thirty miles!" echoed St. Cloud, aghast; "as far as that? Oh, dear, how dreadful!"

He took a good survey of her from head to foot, but said nothing.

"Will you be so good as to tell me whether there is any place near where I might get a night's lodging?" inquired she, looking up with her innocent eyes.

"There's a village about seven miles from here," answered the young man, grimly.

"Seven miles!" echoed she, horrified; "my goodness! it might as well be a hundred."

"Anything else to ask?"

"No—thanks. Oh, what am I to do?" turning away in distress.

"Well, that's rather a sensible question now. Am you asking me?"

"No—no. I beg pardon—"

"All right—hold on a bit. You want to get to Threxford to-night? Well, I'll drive you there in four hours."

And suddenly, with a glow in his half-closed and splendid eyes, the man stopped, flung his arm round the little woman, and lifted her—daintily as a bird—into the empty seat of the car; bounding up after her with one light leap.

"Oh, sir, thanks, but—"

She was frightened and yet not frightened, for was not Phætonous her abridger?

"But—but you think I'm a rough sort," said the man, gathering all the complex reins in one muscular hand.

"Hulloa there! get along!"

And with a bound the four splendid animals were up and away, racing as if John himself held the whip.

First the gray ribs of the deep defile where echoes multiplied a hundred fold the thunderings and the prancings; past the green moonlighted coops where shadows lay across the road like monster cobwebs; over resounding bridges at a gallop, up stony inclines at a reckless canter.

St. Cloud could, with difficulty, keep her seat; every instant she expected to be jolted off the giddy elevation; at every giddy inclining turn of the mountain road she gathered her breast to scream, and passed destruction by a hair's breadth.

The car strained on the traces, and away from side to side of the road like a ship storm-tossed; and over and anon a hoarse, savage roar would make her start and shudder and gaze wildly in the dark face of her companion.

What fierce madman was this into whose clutches a malicious, never-to-be-sated Fate had thrown her?

As she ventured to examine him, she was amazed to find him a perfect Antinous in facial beauty. She defined in the rising moonlight an orient face, with blue-black, gipsy eyes, long, fringed; dangerous with lurking glints of wickedness; a head small, shapely, perfectly poised upon a throat copper-coloured through constant exposure.

His frame was positively magnificent, in its exact proportions, its sinewy strength, its lithic, tigerish muscularity, and his hands, though swart as an Indian's, were small, powerful, and perfectly shaped.

To the form of a Hercules, the face of an Apollo, and the grace of a Narcissus added the savage impetuosity of a war-chief and the maliciousness of a demon, and you have the man before you.

All at once, drawing up his steaming horses and forcing them to a walk, he turned round in his seat and stared fixedly at St. Cloud.

"Where did you drop from?" queried he.

"From the train," replied she, startled into a literal answer.

He glowered some time longer at her, his eyes glimmering.

"Amazingly clever," remarked he, at length, very sourly. "That's all right. You keep mum as the devil—be sure you do."

"I came originally from Scotland," said she, gently, not too anxious to fall out with her charioteer.

"Where all good women come from," added he, beginning to laugh.

"Sir!" exclaimed St. Cloud, haughty and shocked.

"There's nobody of that name here," drawled he, staring hard at her through his veiling lashes.

"They call me Anthony Dare, the lion-tamer."

Her eyes fell before his fixed scrutiny of her, and he continued:

"I've been to London in my day, and ought to know something about the females of that city, shouldn't I?" he said, with a lazy gleam growing in his magnificent eyes.

"I suppose so," murmured she, too timid to remain silent.

"And talking o' them kinds o' cattle," continued he, bending near to gaze into the pure young face, which was now adorably silvered in the brief alchemy of a rising morn. "Don't you fret yourself, if you please. I know a lady when I see one, hanged if I don't, and, by thunder! a lady'll never have to complain of being treated ill by me. Come up, you mules! What the deuce are you about? Ho! Samster, look out there!"

Off they dashed more madly than before. The long lash of the lion-tamer curled like a serpent's tongue round the bounding animals, striking now one now another by way of reminder that their master's inexorable eye was on them.

Down they tore into the valley, with deafening noise of wheels and horses' iron trappings and flinty stones of the road flew up in flashing splinters, frightful roarings from the tossed caravan, while the and the stars danced in the heavens, and the serene night air swooped by like a hurricane.

They passed the village Dare had spoken of at a wild gallop, the villagers rushing out and shouting that the man was drunk. They tore on perhaps three miles beyond it, and then they crossed the ridge of the hill and commenced the descent with a volley of inspiring cries to the half-frantic horses, which sent them capering down like mountain goats.

"I've started the beggars," grinned the man, turning a malicious eye on St. Cloud's quiet but pallid face. "They'll run like that straight into Threxford."

Suddenly they descended on the narrow road, a hundred yards or so in advance, a small, light carriage, leisurely driving in the same direction as themselves.

Anthony Dare, with the eye of a night-hawk, saw at once that the road was by far too narrow for his wide van to pass without a collision, and he uttered a yell to warn them to quicken their horse's pace, reining up his own at the same moment with the strength of an Atlas.

But the hill was precipitously steep, the heavy van came smashing upon the car, which in its turn came down upon the startled horses, and on they darted with mad leaps, panic-stricken.

The moon was shining brilliantly by this time, each side of the steep road was lined with gigantic fire in funeral array—a mass of melting light between. The little gig was distinctly visible for a few seconds flying on in front with the people in it, but suddenly a loud, fierce roar from the van resounded through the arched recesses of the woods, and the scene changed like a shifting phantasy.

There stood the pretty gig half across the road, the horse, a light-built, fiery thing, was on his hind legs, clawing the air with his fore legs, snorting with terror. The gentleman was throwing himself out of the carriage and holding up his arms for the lady, who stood up, and before she took the leap, turned her terrified face and looked at the coming destruction.

In the twinkling of an eye all this passed, while Anthony Dare said to St. Cloud, in his nasal drawl: "By Jove! we'll go straight through them. Wonder whether their trap or mine's the strongest? I say, you, look out for a soft place to fall on to, for we're going to have a spill."

But meanwhile he was endeavouring with all his vast strength to restrain his unmanageable horses, and guiding them past certain destruction with the most splendid management.

But when the lady turned her face to look at them St. Cloud saw her mystic eyes and gold-bright hair, saw her throw up her hands with one awful scream, and fall like a fighting-river true—and down came the fierce cortège like a resistless avalanche.

A shock, a yell, a crunching of shattering wood and right through the midst of the little carriage fled the mighty cavalcade over horse and man and senseless woman, and left all behind like a maniac's dream.

CHAPTER XV.

As one who, amazed at himself, can yet retain his senses on the field of carnage, after the intoxication of the battle is over, so St. Cloud looked quietly about her, astonished herself that she had not lost her reason in the moment of seeing Gerald Travers and Victoria Mist trodden into corpses.

She saw that the horses were delicious with fear and that their driver paid no more heed to them.

He leaned forward, his arms on his knees, his



[A FRIEND IN NEED.]

head hanging, and the reins were slipping slowly from his slackened clasp over the dashboard.

They were entering a defile with a sheer wall of rock on the right hand and a precipice on the left, the road a winding ledge midway, and one false step of those panic-stricken horses would dash the whole cavalcade down into the valley of grinning stones which awaited them below.

The town-bred girl had never driven a horse in her life, but this was no time to think of that.

She caught up the heavy reins and wound them round her wrists, and she stood up in her dizzy perch, and tightened the reins, and cried the horses by the names she had heard Dare call them.

Feeling that slight but earnest strain and hearing the soothing, child-voice, the magnificent brutes insensibly slackened their tremendous running, pointed their flattened ears, and snorted an answer.

It was really beautiful to see how they arched their sleek necks and trotted gently, softly, as if they would not lose a word she said by ruder trampling.

And now, with the hard leather eating into soft flesh, and the four high-bred horses prancing daintily upon the brink of the abyss, and the unwieldy van swaying terrifically round every abrupt curve, now St. Cloud found time to bewail her murdered lover.

"Dead! dead! Heaven help me! My Richard is dead!" she groaned.

She remembered how she had striven to reach him before those vile impostors should do him harm, she fancied them going to his house and asking for him, and being told that he had gone into the country with his wife. Ah, me! he had indeed gone into the country, the far country from which no traveller returns, and his siren wife with him.

Where was all the mad hurry now?

What for?

He was dead, he who had held her in his dear arms, who had kissed her with his sweet lips, who had made her love for all time.

She remembered no more his perfidy, his cruelty, his dishonour; she looked up to the starry heavens and whispered:

"He is a saint up there, and I'll meet him some day."

She stepped the horses when the wild defile was passed, and bent down to look at Anthony Dare as one looks at a dead man.

She could see nothing but his mighty shoulders and his sleek black head, from which the wide-brimmed hat had fallen.

She put her little hand upon his arm with a gentle pressure.

"Mr. Dare," she said, in her low, strange, tragic voice.

He sat upright, shook himself, and passed his tawny hand across his forehead.

Then he looked at her, from the desperate child-face down to the hands of her, and a cold, dry smile disclosed his lustrous teeth between the blood-red, curling lips.

"You're a brave one, ain't you?" drawled he, his gipsy eyes gleaming.

"Oh, sir, we have barely escaped death."

"I daresay. Look here, little girl, you came through the dangerous pass as if them brutes was goss. Who learned you to hold the ribbons so handsome?"

"I don't know. It's hard to be done. Oh! Mr. Dare, it has been dreadful!" speaking heavily-hearted.

"Has it?"

He took up her hands and gently removed the reins from them, looked a moment at the dark bruises, then stared in her face again.

"You've got a pretty pair of hands to carry home to your beau, haven't you, now?" he grimly demanded. "Why didn't you give me a push instead of cutting up your baby-flesh with them feathers?"

"I fear you fainted."

"The deuce I did," he said, with a demoniac grin.

"No, my girl, I ain't your fainting sort. I believe I dreamed though that I saw the old un without horns or tail. Ho! ho! ho!"

"Oh, Heaven help us! I am sure we killed them!"

"So am I. At least I hope we did. Well, say what's on the tip of your tongue."

"Inhuman villain! he was my lover!" she exclaimed, passionately.

For a moment he looked at her, astonished, then burst into hoarse laughter.

"Well, that's funny!" drawled he; "so we're a pair, eh? You've lost a Jack. I a Jill, and the old boy take 'em both, since they've got together."

"What do you mean?" cried St. Cloud, eagerly—for a jealous woman cannot resist the opportunity of covering a rival with shame.

The lion-tamer vouchsafed no reply, but swung himself to the ground.

"Don't you move," growled he. "We'll turn the trap and go back to gather up the fragments that nothing be lost," with a brutal jocularity.

"Not with the horses!"

"Yes, with the horses!" mimicking her terrified voice. "I'll drive awhile, if you've no objection. I've got over my—faint," with a sneer.

He unchained the van, and with a mighty push sent it into the bushes.

In answer to a howl from within, he unbolted the narrow door at the end, and leaped in among the caged animals, and to judge from the terrific roars that arose he flogged them into silence.

Then he came out, mounted to his perch, turned his four piebalds back toward the defile, and was off.

"Gently, my beauties! gently! Well done, Fury; well done, old girl!"

Nothing could be kinder than his manner now. They created their heads, pricked their ears, and trod softly and delicately the terrible way, listening for his voice as if they loved it.

And, indeed, to hear him as he soothed and praised them each by name, one would suppose him to be the softest-hearted fellow in the universe, adored by man and beast.

But, perhaps, a veritable demon may have some human feelings, and Anthony Dare was likely not so bad as he wanted people to think he was.

Meanwhile little St. Cloud sat beside him in an agony of impatience. She was hoping against hope that Dick might not be dead yet, and that she might have the forlorn delight of having him die in her arms.

If she could only reach him in time to hear the dear lips say, "St. Cloud I was bewitched; but she never took my heart from you!" she thought she could bear her life afterward the better.

Toward the woman herself she only felt a shuddering pity, unmingled with a spark of regret. Presently the cliff was passed, and they approached the scene of the tragedy—the funeral fortress stood on either side of the silvery lane, and some dark objects were strewing it.

Sidling, snorting, bolting, the horses were urged forward: they could smell death there, and their limbs were bathed in a perspiration of terror.

Anthony Dare spoke to them between his teeth, sprang out to the leaders' head, and led them shuddering close to the spot. Then he lifted St. Cloud from her place, and they stooped together over the shapeless ruin. All was quiet as the grave—silent, terrible.

Here lay the little fly a mass of unsightly splinters, here lay the chequered horse, flattened on the road, with wide eyes bulging open; yonder a lady's glove, a perfumed handkerchief, a jewelled whip; but the owners of these toys were gone!

The lion-tamer looked at the wondering, rapturous face of the woman by his side and shrieked with demoniac laughter.

(To be continued.)



THE BARONET'S SON;

OR, LOVE AND HATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Winifred Wynne," "One Sparkle of Gold," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing—
An instinct call it, a blind sense,
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how nor whence,
Nor whither going.

The dusk of the February evening had just deepened into the darkness that more immediately preceded the night.

The busy traffic of the day was suspended and the only wayfarers of the comparatively secluded region of Westbourne were either somewhat tardy masters of households returning to their homes or young men quitting their lodgings on some evening expedition.

And so completely were even these figures obscured and concealed by the dusky atmosphere and the thick shelter of the trees that it was decidedly the most favourable opportunity for those who had any wish to disguise their movements from their fellow creatures.

And it seemed to be so considered by the tenants of one at least of the lofty mansions in Westbourne Terrace, who decidedly preferred the shelter of the deep, gray, misty light to the more garish illumination of the day.

Cautiously and by slow degrees there was a side door opened that led into a kind of garden vestibule, filled with plants and flowers, and two figures crept out, and with noiseless and measured steps stole along the walk till they came to a small gate, evidently intended only for the domestics of the mansion.

The female figure, who was apparently the leader of the two, had a light but somewhat bulky package in her hand, while her companion held a somewhat smaller but perhaps heavier bag that seemed almost too much for his strength.

He walked feebly and with trembling steps, though there was evidently a desperate determination on his part to preserve a manly and vigorous bearing.

[FALLEN FROM THEIR HIGH ESTATE.]

The female looked anxiously back from time to time as they advanced along the walk, though she attempted to veil her alarm from the masculine pride that might have taken umbrage at the slight to his powers.

But both in their different ways were certainly relieved when they reached a spot on the other side of the terrace where, sheltered by trees and drawn up in the corner of the roadway, was a vehicle, whose driver was nodding lazily on his box in the dusky quiet of the night.

Gladys Vandeleur, for it was she, hastily awakened him by her soft, clear voice that came bright and ringing on the stillness.

In another moment the door of the cab was opened, the new-comers stepping in, and without a word, as if directions had been already given, the man drove off in the direction towards the north-west district.

He did not pause, for the roads and streets were clear enough to allow of a rapid course, and though perhaps the turnings and the intricacies of the way did somewhat hinder quick progress, yet in the course of some hour or so the cab came to a halt before a lowly building in a narrow and thickly sheltered lane, too rural and too secluded to be at all in character with the great city of which its neighbourhood formed a suburb, and that was included in its environs.

Here the vehicle stopped, and Gladys sprang out with an air of relief that betrayed itself in the deep, deep sigh that came from the long-preserved tension of her nerves now relaxed for the first time during her anxious residence in the metropolis.

Oscar followed her with a slower and feebler step. The cabman handed out the packages, received his fare, and departed.

It was not till the door had closed behind them and the brother and sister were fairly ensconced in the little sitting-room of the cottage that the girl gave way to the emotion that had so long burdened her heart.

Then she threw herself on Oscar's shoulder, and, clasping his neck in her arms, she burst into a flood of happy tears.

"Darling brother, at last you are safe. It is impossible that any harm can come to you here. No one is likely to discover you after this, thank Heaven!"

Oscar was either less hopeful than his sister or he was too much exhausted and weak to fully enter into her joy.

Still he did not dissent save by a melancholy smile and then an equally desponding glance around the humble menage.

"Gladys, only imagine what my feeling must be to think that I have brought you to this," he said, gloomily—"you, the daughter of Sir Lewis Vandeleur, the petted daughter of luxury and wealth."

"That is just what I never was, dear Oscar," she exclaimed, brushing away her tears with a bright smile. "It certainly cannot be denied that I was surrounded with all that money could purchase. But as to my petting it was all reserved for Wenna, and you are the only one who has ever been inclined to spoil me, and, what is more, I intend that you shall spoil me a great deal more while I am with you."

Oscar kissed her fondly. "Who indeed could resist one so sweet and so bright and lovely?" he thought. "Even Sir Lewis must be utterly hardened against all the sweetest and holiest feelings to be steeled against such a creature."

Gladys now began to bestir herself in the new domicile.

She summoned a youthful domestic who formed the entire establishment that the baronet's daughter could boast, and requested to be shown over the cottage, which the girl had apparently been inhabiting for some short time before their arrival.

"Yes, miss. You see I did what I could," said Susan, the small servant in question. "You know you gave me money when you came yesterday, miss, for what was wanted, and if you'll please to look round and see the bill, you'll see it's all right, miss."

Gladys gave a kindly smile at the anxious servant.

It was at any rate satisfactory to perceive that the girl had so much sense and education as to execute the commissions entrusted to her with so much accuracy and exactitude.

"Dear miss, if you please," said Susan, proceeding her young mistress with a candle to the tiny kitchen where she had a fire burning and a kettle perfectly furious with its fierce steam, "I've got bread and butter and eggs, and tea, miss, and a bit of bacon from the shop where my schoolmistress used to deal. I thought it would do for your supper and breakfast in the morning, miss."

Gladys could not help a half-mocking smile at the delicacies provided for her—she, who had been accustomed to the cuisine of a first-rate cook, and the whole entourage of plate and servants and glass that gave each trifle a fresh and tempting charm. But another moment banished the pardonable weakness.

It was ungrateful, she thought, to cherish one regard for such superfluity which she had the great blessing granted to her of Oscar's life and safety.

So the damsel inspected the tiny larder and then

went up the half-dozen or so steps that led to the bedroom with the resolve to make herself interested and happy in her novel duties.

Now rooms that would have been utterly declined by the servants at the Hall were the future sleeping apartments of Oscar and herself, while a large closet, rather than a room, was destined for the youthful Susan.

But the very humbleness of the dwelling was a still greater safeguard for Oscar's safety, and as such had been welcomed by her—in addition to the cheapness of the rent.

Gladys had not much idea of the value of money, but still she did comprehend that their store would not last longer than some few short months, in any case.

And what was still more alarming, she felt that any attempt to earn money might be still more dangerous, from the clue it might give to the residing place of the fugitive.

So she cheerfully completed what little changes were in her power in the arrangement of the rooms, and returned to the sitting-room to dispense the tea that Susan had quickly prepared.

"Darling Oscar," she said, fondly, "how pale and tired you look. Do you know I cannot give you so much nourishment as you ought to have? What shall I do for you, my darling brother?" she said, yielding for a moment to despondency. "It does seem so cruel, so very cruel."

"Not at all, Gladys," he replied, hastily. "At least not so far as my punishment for my own follies is concerned. And if you do see me weak and desponding, you must only imagine it is punishment for the insanity that brought me in this shape."

"Yet," he continued, more sternly, "there is one on whose head the full-onus will fall with tenfold force—the father who should have been my true friend, and who has persecuted me with such relentless hate. Gladys, you once stopped the curse from falling from his lips, but even you could not prevent its resting on me with all its heaviness."

"And on me also, Oscar. I share it to the full," returned Gladys, more cheerfully. "Do you not know that my father has in every possible manner banished me from his heart and home and presence. So you see I am your especial and fated companion in every respect," she continued, with a bright smile.

"No, Gladys, not in sin and folly," he said, "though I must say, in justice to myself and our common name, I was not guilty of the crime that was laid to my charge, though, alas! it is hopeless to prove it, unless by Heaven's help and providence!"

And the repentant prodigal raised his eyes with a beseeching look, that proved the real sincerity of his sorrow and of his trust. There was silence for a few moments, then the girl once more spoke:

"Oscar, I have sometimes doubted since your recovery whether it would have been possible for you to learn to be happy with the unlucky Miss Bradley, and whether you are not risking certain danger and hardships, without any hope for long years, to come that any happier fate can be yours. I mean so far as Edith is concerned."

"Are you quite sure we have done what is well and right, dearest," she added, earnestly.

Oscar paused an instant, ere he replied. He glanced round the humble, tiny apartment, he looked at the humble fare that would in future be his only nourishment, even in his weakness and his capricious appetite.

Then he took a faint, questioning gaze at the lovely face of his sister, in which he could not altogether ignore the traces of the sufferings she had undergone for his sake.

There was a contest in his mind that needed long and deep consideration to decide. It was a conflict between opposing instincts, between the past and future, he needed to realize the whole burden of distress and shame which had well nigh weighed him to the grave.

He had to consider the danger that threatened him by persisting in his present course.

Joseph Bradley would be doubly incensed by the shadow that had come over his favourite daughter—the scandal and the ridicule which would fall on the head of the fair and youthful and rejected bride.

All this was in his mind as he closed his eyes to hide the fearful vision that conjured up the worst phantoms of his delusion, but which were only too real and tangible for mere ravings of fever.

He could almost feel the touch of a hand on his shoulder, then the sound of a voice in his ear, the herald of prison and shame and death.

Then came nobler and higher thoughts.

At least his honour would be saved, his heart free, free to think of and to love her who was worthy of his dearest worship.

He would be a Vandeleur once more, he would be freed from the disgraceful and humiliating thralldom that had bound his best and highest faculties.

Save for the sake of his ancient name, of Edith's scorn of the deep misery of the heroic Gladys, he would not even hesitate in his final choice.

"Gladys, what would Edith say, would she believe me innocent if I gave her my solemn word that the accusation was unjust?" he asked. "Would she acquit me where all condemned? Would she weep when others would scorn, and pray for me where others would only think me false and perjured?"

Gladys paused for a brief moment, as if to give even more weight to her reply ere she spoke.

Then it came firm and clear.

"Oscar, if Edith is true and good as I believe and as you would paint her, there is no fear, you may trust her as you would yourself, you may leave your fate and your fame in her keeping. No woman who is worthy of the name will ever doubt the word of the man she loves, who has trusted his happiness and his honour to her faith and truth," she added, fervently.

It was enough.

The tears moistened in Oscar's nearly-closed eyes the words, and he doubted no longer.

"Gladys, my darling sister, I will be worthy of you and of her. I will meet all and anything for her sake. I can but bear my fate like a man whatever may befall. Let all be at rest for ever. Trust in me, and an fortune can avail. The brother of a heroine like you ought indeed to be brave. I will hesitate no more. Better anything than dishonour and disgrace while conscience is at rest and honour untarnished."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"PAPA, where are we to return home? where is Oscar now? It seems so strange that we should know nothing about our—our—husband," said Lily Bradley, entering the room where her father was busily occupied in his usual duties, all apart from the rest of his family, as was his ordinary custom.

Lily was privileged; or it might have been that the intrusion would have been more rudely checked.

Mr. Bradley only looked up from his papers with a somewhat uneasy air, but without any actual response on his lips.

"My dear, I have already told you that Mr. Vandeleur was already sickening with a very infectious disease when he fell ill so suddenly on your marriage, and, of course, it could not have been even thought of that you should run any risk on that account."

"Yet many wives do more for their husbands in even more terrible complaints," said Lily, doubtfully.

"You are not a wife, was the sententious answer."

"I have stood at the altar with him, therefore I am certainly very much like one," she answered, significantly.

There was a different air about the girl since that eventful day.

She was graver, more retired, and her very features and expression seemed to have been changed by the trial.

Yet her father did not perceive it. He looked on her simply as a child, as a wilful girl still. One to be moulded at his pleasure, either to love or to withdraw her heart. One who would not grieve over the fate of him she had been taught to consider as her future husband, the companion and the arbiter of her fate.

Her course perhaps took the father by surprise.

"My dear child, you are too young to at all comprehend such matters," he said, in a decisive tone; "you must leave them to my better experience. You forget that it would be the very greatest mistake and pity for you to be left with another name and the restraints of a widow upon you before you are anything like out of your teens. It might seriously alter your prospects."

"I thought young widows were always interesting," replied the wilful girl. "But, papa, tell me, do you mean that Oscar is dead?" she added, in a more subdued tone.

Mr. Bradley scarcely knew how to reply.

It was no pleasant task to say to so young a bride that the man she had been taught to consider with love and admiration was no more.

Yet now otherwise could he account for the utter ignorance of his presumed son-in-law's fate?

"My dear Lily," he replied, "I must tell you honestly that I have no actual certainty that Oscar is dead, but there is every reason to apprehend it to be the case. I never like, as you know, to expose any one to actual danger from which I would shrink myself," he added, profusely, "and, therefore, I really had very little chance of accurate information about the young man's state. At the same time, I believe that we may safely conclude that he is dead."

my Lily, and, if so, congratulate ourselves on your escape from so painful a position."

"Do you suppose I shall regret him less because I have not spoken a few more words at the altar, papa?" asked the poor girl, sharply. "I tell you that I do love him, I never saw any one like him and I do not suppose it is likely that in our station we ever shall meet with one again. Papa, if he is dead, it will be a very long, long time before I marry any one, you may be sure of that."

And Lily brushed away the moisture that was collecting in her bright eyes.

"I might have been sure of this, I might have thought that I ran too great a risk in introducing such a man to you," replied Mr. Bradley, impatiently. "However, though you are a favourite child, Lily, I warn you that I shall not be trifled with by you. If Oscar is living I am quite content, on the conditions that I already made, to give him your hand and fortune. But if he does die, I shall not expect, nor tolerate any nonsense. You will marry at my pleasure, or else forfeit your fortune, I can assure you," he added, sternly.

"It will be time enough to settle all that when poor Oscar is really gone, papa," was the calm reply. "Only I do insist on knowing in some manner what his state is. If you are afraid for others to go to the house, I will willingly run the risk."

Mr. Bradley sat aghast.

It was the first sign of rebellion, an oven of suspicion of thought and will that he had ever experienced from his children and he was proportionately incensed.

"My dear Lily, do not go so far, do not provoke me," he said, in a low voice. "I will not bear further accusations from that most aggravating young fellow. When on earth ever heard of a young man being taken ill on his wedding-day? We must suppose it was done on purpose," he went on complacently.

"And the intention and the danger, what of that?" asked Lily, coldly.

"That is another thing. Some persons would say that it had been wantonly and needlessly provoked," said Mr. Bradley. "I really can't give an opinion positively. I only know that so ill-omened a marriage is not likely to be of any good result. And it will be a very good thing if he does die, die in my opinion."

Lily waited for a few minutes ere she spoke again.

It was curious to see in her face a sort of reflection of her father's expression, though one was plebeian and plain in its outline and the other so pretty in the actual contour.

"Papa, I have never thought much about anything of this kind before," she said, coldly. "I never cared much about any one till I saw Oscar, though, of course, I always knew that I should be married some day if I chose, and I was determined not to have any one like Lucile's lover for my husband. Besides, I wish to be a great lady, as Oscar's wife must be one day. I should like to go to court, and to see grand people, as Lady Vandeleur will do, and if Oscar dies it will be hopeless. Papa, if he dies, what shall I do?" she went on. "I tell you I am not going to be checked and snubbed as you seem to think, at your pleasure. If you will not go to ask about him, I shall."

And he banished from my house for ever," said the father, angrily.

Lily shrugged her shoulders.

"I am not afraid, papa. No one can even blame me for going to see the man to whom I had promised everything but the actual words that made me his. I will know whether he is living or dead, and if he is living I shall never cease to consider myself as his wife."

And the girl drew herself up with an air of determined dignity, that was all foreign to her usual frivolous and trifling demeanour.

It was strange how those same magic words had been so often spoken about the unhappy baronet's son, how often it had been asked, and doubted whether Oscar Vandeleur was "living or dead."

And the answer now as then involved the happiness and the destiny of so many human beings, and yet then and now it would still remain a doubtful and moot point as to the existence of the luckless object of such violent love and hate.

Mr. Bradley nodded on his chair.

"Well, child, will you promise me then that if I do find the young fellow is dead you will not make yourself and every one else unhappy?" he answered at last. "Now hearken to me, Lily; you do not know and never will, how much I have been willing to sacrifice, for you are my youngest and favourite daughter, because I wished you to hold the rank that I believe you are fitted for and that you have money enough to win. And though I grant that Oscar was a handsome young fellow who luckily was very well fitted to take a girl's eye, and secure her

heart, yet still if he had not been a baronet's son I would as soon have seen you in your grave as have thrown him in your way. And it will be a very poor return for all my kindness and anxiety for you to turn rebellious and pretty well break my heart, which is set upon making a complete lady of you, my pretty Lily."

And he looked fondly and proudly at his child, as he spoke; though he tried hard to assume an angry, paternal sternness.

"I am very much obliged to you, papa, but still it will be time enough to speak of all that when I am really a widow," said the girl, coolly. "It is no fault of mine whatever you have done to drive Oscar frantic; but it is my place to make you do right, and so I will," she added, in a firm, almost desperate tone.

Mr. Bradley seemed to hesitate—almost to quiver at his young daughter's words.

His very tone was altered from the usual abrupt or plausible style, which he could assume at his pleasure, to one more subdued and stern.

"Lily, my child," he said, "you are talking of what you do not understand, nor is it fit you should understand. My opinion is changed since I consented, since I even wished for your marriage with Oscar Vandeleur. It were better now that he died, though even then I should lose more heavily than I should like to confess by the transaction."

"And what shall I not lose, papa?" said the girl, putting, "I really did like him very much, and then to think of all he will have, and the title, and that I should be 'my lady' some day! It is for me to complain, not you."

"I tell you again, child, you are talking at random," said Mr. Bradley, impatiently; "however, there may perhaps be some sense in what you say, according to your knowledge. And if you will promise me to submit to my opinion, and, more, should I really prove to be justified in enjoying it, then I am ready to yield this much: I will myself ascertain the present condition of this unfortunate young bridegroom of yours, and if he is in a state to be seen and conversed with I shall venture to risk an interview."

"But," he added, firmly, "it must entirely depend on the result of that conversation whether I permit the marriage to be completed. Now, Lily, are you satisfied?"

The almost bride had perhaps some slight share of her father's shrewdness mingled with her willful and frivolous nature.

She knew tolerably well her father's moods, and could form some accurate idea of the importance of the result which induced him to be so determinedly opposed to what had been so favourite a scheme.

"If I can get no better terms, I suppose I am bound to be, papa," was the reply, "but I cannot forget that it was you who arranged everything between us, and it is no fault of mine that it has not turned out just as you expected. But if you will promise me to let me know the whole truth about Oscar, and to do all you can to bring him back to me, I will try and wait with patience for what you will have to tell. Don't be long, papa, will you, before you go to him?"

She threw her arms claspingly round her father's neck, as she spoke, and Joseph Bradley was fain to yield to the gentle blandishment of this indulged and favourite child.

Once again Oscar's fate was to be influenced by the love of woman, however it might be overbalanced by the hatred of man.

The contest was still waging whether it was to be concluded over the burial or the bridal of the object of such deep and intense passion.

"It shall not be many days, my love," he said, releasing himself from Lily's caress. "Come, it will add to my happiness as much as yours if my doubts are cleared up and Oscar Vandeleur prove worthy of you and your noble dowry. Now run away and keep your own counsel, or our compact is at an end."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It was scarcely more than twenty-four hours after the conversation with Joseph Bradley and his half-wedded daughter when a cab drove up at his spacious residence at Westbourne Terrace, and a man of some forty or so years of age and a style of look and dress that was well nigh indefinable as to his especial station or employment stepped out and gave a loud pull at the bell.

It was some time ere it was answered, and when at last an elderly woman drew back the bolt and opened the door her questioning, scared look had nothing very propitious in its expression to the applicant.

"Pray is Mr. Oscar Vandeleur here?" asked the man—"I wish to see him particularly."

The woman gave a half-mocking laugh.

"You'd, perhaps, scarcely have wished to see him when he was here, I guess, unless you were tired of your life. We'd the black fever, you see, and though I have been in the house for the last month or so I even never have gone into his room yet. And I don't mean to do so till the family are coming back, and the place will have to be cleaned by some one, in course."

The visitor hesitated.

"Then where is he now? Is he living or—"

"Oh, so far as I know he is not dead, returned the woman, "though he might as well be so, I should judge, as far as I know. I shouldn't think that the young lady would ever think of him again after playing her such a trick and falling ill just at the wedding-day. I would not, I know," she added, nodding her head significantly.

"No doubt you judge perfectly right, my good dame," said the new comer, blandly. "Only, as my business is even more urgent than the delayed bridal, and may perhaps even affect it somewhat, I shall be glad to know where I should be likely to find him."

"That's just what I cannot say, sir. He and the young lady made a sort of moonlight flitting, as you may say, and alighted, I should think, in my notions, the more especially as it's very little of a match for a young creature like Miss Lily—only a tutor, as you may say."

"Pray then can you give me any idea as to Mr. Bradley's present residence?" was the next question.

The woman hesitated.

"I—I really cannot say—I am not quite sure, sir, and, besides—but, dear me, why, if he is not coming here himself?" she added, retreating with a yet more alarmed look than she had worn on the first comer's arrival.

"Who? Mr. Vandeleur?" exclaimed the man, eagerly.

But a glance convinced him that the spare, gray-haired individual who was steadily walking up the carriage drive, with the air of a person who had a right to be there, was not the young invalid bridegroom of Miss Lily Vandeleur, the son of the baronet of the Hall.

"Pray what may you require, sir, since it seems you are applying at my house? Can I do anything for you?" said this same unprepossessing personage, with a far less bland manner than the words would have indicated.

"If you are Mr. Bradley I shall be very glad of an interview," said the new comer, coolly. "Perhaps, should you not be at leisure just now, you may think it best to make an appointment."

"I am not accustomed to make such appointments with unknown individuals and without knowing what they are meant for," replied Joseph Bradley, haughtily. "Perhaps you will oblige me with your name. You certainly have one, I suppose?" he added, rather scornfully.

"I certainly do rejoice in that not very uncommon possession," returned the man, in a perfectly untruffled tone. "At the same time, I am afraid you would be very little the wiser were I to mention myself as a Mr. Brown or Mr. Jones. The business on which I am bound is far more to the purpose, and I should not be very much surprised, sir, if it was very much like what has induced you to visit your residence this morning."

Joseph Bradley's keen eyes twinkled with a keen questioning.

"You can come in if you like then, and I will see you for a few minutes at any rate," was the reply. "But I warn you that I cannot see you very long unless your errand is a very important one, for I am very much pressed for time this morning."

The man followed the rather reluctant host to the first room that presented itself, and then, closing the door behind them, Mr. Bradley pointed to a chair, while he took another nearly on a level with it.

"Now, sir, if you please. Walls have ears, you know, and as folks are apt to be curious when they are left alone we may very likely be overheard, so you may as well speak low, if it is all the same to you," he said, sarcastically.

"Oh, dear, yes, quite so," returned the man, in an extremely moderate accent, "and I am quite prepared to come to the point, if time is so great an object to you, my good sir. In few words, what is your object and your intention about your would-be son-in-law, Mr. Oscar Vandeleur?"

Joseph Bradley started slightly at the sound of the name, though perhaps he was not unprepared for its mention.

"Before I answer such a question I must certainly demand you name and the right that you may have to know my private affairs and purposes," he said, firmly.

"The name, as I told you, is of very small con-

sequence, and in some respects it had better remain unsaid," said the man, coolly. "But I will soon satisfy you as to the reason and the right that I have to inquire into even this especial and personal matter."

He stooped forward as he spoke and whispered a word into Mr. Bradley's ear that made him actually recoil with surprise and that of no very pleasant character.

"Well," he said, "and what then? I scarcely can see that I am to be controlled or influenced in my arrangements by anybody, except my own and my daughter's wishes, and those are irrespective of those from whom you came."

The man gave a half-mocking smile.

"I am not quite so certain of that, Mr. Bradley," he said. "Now, in the present case you will do well to consider whether the proposal I have to make to you this morning may not alter your plans with respect to the unfortunate young man."

"You can tell me, if you like, I shall know what to reply, and also, I will keep it in perfect confidence, unless there is some very strong reason to the contrary," returned Mr. Bradley.

The man did not answer at first.

He bent his head forward, then he took a paper from his pocket and inspected it with profound consideration ere he spoke again.

"Mr. Bradley, I am not at all anxious to spend time in beating about the bush," he said, "and, what is more, I would be very loth to doubt your pledge of secrecy in any case. However, we must exchange mutual confidence to be able to get on as rapidly as we wish. I presume I am correct in saying that Oscar Vandeleur is heavily indebted to you, is it not so?"

"Possibly, but that is a matter rather for me to consider than any one else," said Joseph Bradley, sharply.

"True; only that I am bound to suppose that it will be rather a consideration, even to a man of Mr. Bradley's wealth," was the cool answer. "I am perfectly aware that you are quite able to dispense with fortune in a son-in-law, and also that you will not materially suffer should the sum owing to you by Mr. Oscar Vandeleur be left unpaid. At the same time, I should think it would be somewhat more pleasant, and a great feature in the plans you may have formed with respect to Miss Bradley, if you are aware that you will be no loser from the episode of her lover's residence in your household."

"Pray what will be the condition of such a wonderful bond?" asked Joseph, coolly. "I do not expect anything for nothing, any more than I am in the habit of giving it, my good friend."

"Of course in that case the transaction will be a sort of quits," rejoined the visitor. "That is, Mr. Bradley, should you be induced to accept the heavy sum that will be necessary to liquidate the young man's debts you must of course free him from any obligation to your daughter, even after that semi-marriage ceremony, and; I need scarcely add, give up all idea of assisting him or offering him a home in your hospitable mansion," he went on, with a mocking smile.

Joseph Bradley decidedly recoiled from this apparently generous offer, whether the repugnance was caused by his promise to his daughter or his own personal inclinations.

"It is a very wholesale demand and a binding clause," he said. "Pray on what grounds is the condition based?"

The guest shrugged his shoulders scornfully.

"Listen to me, Mr. Bradley, when I tell you in all truth and soberness the real state of matters. Suppose, we will say, that the young man in question became the husband of your daughter, I would ask on what grounds you base your hopes of her ever succeeding to the title and the estates of the Vandeleurs? May not death, or even other causes, interfere with the plans you may form? May not the marriage be barren and fruitless, and the money you have wasted be utterly lost to your family? I am not speaking from any empty or baseless fancies. It is a real and undoubted prospect that no man of sense or business habits like yourself can ignore."

Joseph Bradley leaned his head on his hand in deep thoughtfulness while the slow words were spoken—it was evident that he did not by any means disregard the arguments thus used.

But when he did at last rouse up from his reverie there was a stern and determined resolve in his whole demeanour.

"I comprehend all you would say, sir, and the motives of those who sent you," he said, calmly; "but I am not to be hurried or driven into so important a decision. You are quite right in supposing that I have no wish to throw away my money broadcast, and, on the other hand, I am not inclined to change my plans at the first breath of scandal and remonstrance."

"I shall take time to consider and look into the circumstances of the case, and when I have fully made up my mind you can try your luck again," he added, with a derisive smile. "If you like to see me again in a short time and to ascertain my final decision, I will certainly not refuse to give you an interview and an answer as frank and candid as you can desire, that is my ultimatum, and I will now wish you good morning, as my time is precious."

And Mr. Bradley fairly bowed his guest out of the room and the house.

(To be continued.)

THE DRAMA.

"THE GASCON" AT THE OLYMPIC.

THIS new piece is actually a romantic version of the story of Marie Stuart with the poet Chastelard, and has been transferred from the Parisian to the London stage by Mr. Musker.

The Gascon, who is of course the hero of the piece, is a representative of the actual Gasconade of the French stage—the unconscionable liar and supercilious braggart, whose only redeeming feature is a really indomitable courage, a real love of fighting and intrigue. He is, of course, a gentleman in difficulties, a waster who has nothing except a barren title—the Chevalier Artaban de Paycadere; and Mr. Henry Neville makes what he can of him, which is by no means an insignificant character.

At the fair of St. Germain the chevalier contrives to rescue Mary Carmichael, maid of honour to Marie Stuart, from a party of students who assail her, and this leads to the lady and gentleman falling in love in the good old fashion, though the boastful Gascon is compelled to resort to rather undignified methods to obtain a meal. But the chevalier meets with Chastelard, who is in love with Marie Stuart, and he then enlists all his courage, his impudence and his mendacity in the cause of the poet lover, whose ruin, as well as that of the queen, is sought by Lord Maxwell.

In order to thwart the plots of this nobleman, the chevalier resolves on the amazing expedient of causing himself to be announced as an envoy, and, in the gardens of the palace, presents his credentials to Marie—the said credentials being, in fact, a copy of love verses written to her by Chastelard, who is on the spot ready to be introduced to the queen, who is already in love with him.

How the Gascon not only shows how he lies, but how he loves and how he dies, in several tableaux can only be slightly gathered from the mention that he confesses to Mary Carmichael the falsehoods of which he has been guilty—accepts an assignation devised by Lord Maxwell—where he is set upon by three opponents and wounded, and even then contrives to find out a secret passage which leads to the queen's apartment at the back of the oratory, just in time to enable Chastelard to escape, while he (the chevalier) is ready to meet the Scotch lords and Darnley, who have broken into the room expecting to find the poet lover. Perhaps it is as well that the dying is left to the imagination of the audience, for really everybody hopes that he may live after all.

The part of the queen is sustained by Mrs. Rousby, who is specially engaged, and looks and plays it with remarkable success. Her love-scenes with Chastelard were especially good.

Mr. George Neville, also, who made his first appearance in the character of Walter, Lord Maxwell, the determined foe of the Gascon, acted with a breadth and directness which promises well for his future. This gentleman is the author of a comedy-dietta, entitled "The Reconciliation," with which the performance of the evening commenced. It was equally telling and brief, occupying little more than half an hour.

The costumes are exceedingly picturesque, and the scenery is well worthy of the reputation of the theatre and of Mr. Julian Hicks.

"THE RIVAL OTHELLOS" AT THE STRAND.

IN the days when the second Exhibition was in progress, two rival tragedians were taking the stage, and each commanding the circle of his believers. Their peculiarity of style, and opposite "readings" of Shakespeare, suggested an opportunity to Mr. H. J. Byron, who produced, at the Strand Theatre, an amusing farce, which had its day, and was forgotten. But the present time, with the revival of "Othello," seemed a favourable opportunity for refurbishing the old piece; and this Mr. H. J. Byron has done—polishing, grinding, and altering, till he has produced that which keeps the Strand Theatre—crowded to the ceiling—in a roar of laughter.

The plot is very simple. We have a country manager (Mr. H. J. Turner), very hard up at his

little theatre at Grubley, and he writes to invite "The Great Mirving" to come down and play Othello, so as to refill his treasury. The manager's wife (Miss Claude) has, with the same object in view, ventured, unknown to her husband, to invite "The Great Malvini," the Italian artist.

Neither of these gentlemen responds, but an amateur imitates "The Great Mirving," and a conjurer, who passes off as Bosco, professes now to be "The Great Malvini." Manager and managers are deceived: the great stars are sent to their dressing-rooms, and at last encounter, in full costume, Mirving (Mr. Terry), in red, after the Lycosum fashion, and Malvini (M. Marius), in blue, à la Drury Lane. They quarrel, of course, compare notes, and each gives his reading of Othello in a scene of the wildest burlesque.

Mr. Irving's peculiarities are hit off and exaggerated with marvellous fidelity by Mr. Terry; and the actions of Signor Salvini are travestied with considerable humour by M. Marius. There is a slight undercurrent of love, but it is not made at all prominent, for the attention of the audience is too much centred in the absurdities of "The Rival Othellos." Some of the fun is rather mad, but, on the whole, it gives an opening for genuine comic acting, and in no way is it tinged by ill-nature or cynicism. Mr. Irving and the renowned signor might sit side by side in the stalls and join in the mirth, which is throughout as hearty as is generally to be found at the Strand.

GLOBE THEATRE.

THE entertainment at this house consists of a new and original farce by Mr. J. E. Soden, called "The Tailor Makes the Man," in which an accidental change of clothing for the worse nearly loses a lover his mistress.

This is followed by an adaptation of Dickens's "Bleak House," by Mr. J. B. Burnett, entitled "Jo," in which the fortunes of the poor street-sweeper are followed to their fatal conclusion. The audience are made to take a manifest interest in the several occurrences which lead the police inspector, Mr. Bucket—a character powerfully impersonated by the adapter himself—to insist on the little fellow "moving on," until he can move no farther.

Jo is admirably depicted by Miss Jennie Lee. The realism, the spirit, and thorough appreciation of the character are worthy of all praise, and give to the piece an interest in the humorous touches and genuine pathos that it would not otherwise possess. In all points, even to the trivialities of the make-up, Miss Lee has mastered her part.

The affairs of the Dedlock family are suggestively treated; and Miss Louisa Hibbert as the Lady was as stately and as well befitting her position, and Sir Leicester was well represented by Mr. Edward Price. Mr. Flockton, too, was close and cold as Mr. Talkinghorn; and the Frenchwoman, Hortense, was ably illustrated by Miss Delores Drummond.

The scenery is, on the whole, good. The little burial ground in Russell Court and "Tom All-alone's" are excellent, and the simple scene between Jo and Lady Dedlock at the gate of the former is the best in the piece and the whole performance has an air of realism which will ensure the popularity of the old story as a new drama.

At the St. James's Theatre "All for Her" still continues to attract large audiences. The Hugh Trevor of Mr. John Clayton is an artistic piece of acting; Miss Rose Coghlan is seen to great advantage in the character of Lady Marsden; and Miss Caroline Hill, as Mary Rivers, is deserving of praise. Mr. H. Wigan's Radford is very masterly. Messrs. Palgrave Simpson and Merivale, the authors, have given to the public an original and poetical play, the equal of which has not been seen for years, and the management deserves much praise for the complete manner in which it has been placed upon the stage.

At the Surrey Mr. Holland has given what he terms a second edition of his pantomime, "Jack, the Giant-Killer," in which Miss Nelly Power, in the character of the hero, takes the place of Jennie Lee now acting the part, as above stated, of Jo at the Globe. A new cast has been given to the harlequinade, in which, for the first time, Harry Taylor acts as clown, James Fawn as policeman extraordinary, and Wattie Brunton as pantaloone, harlequin being Miss Nelly Moon and columbine Miss Susan Vaughan.

THE ROYAL AQUARIUM.

AT the recent opening of the Aquarium and Winter Garden at Westminster élat was given to the proceedings by the presence of the Duke of Edinburgh, who performed the ceremony of declaring the building open, and who expressed himself

pleased at the arrangements made and contemplated for the establishment of an attractive and at the same time useful place of entertainment for Londoners. Everything was done for the comfort of visitors, who thronged the building from early in the morning till late at night.

At present the building has rather an unfinished appearance, but upon completion, will doubtless be more attractive to the eye. Some disappointment was felt at the aquarium tanks being tenantless. These are placed at different positions around the building. They are of good size, and when stocked will doubtless prove one of the greatest attractions of the building.

Both fresh and salt-water fish will be exhibited, the arrangements made for a large supply of water being such as to secure as great a success as has ever been attained in any inland aquarium in the world. At present our notice of the building and its contents must be necessarily brief, as few of the attractions promised were in "working order."

When the skating rink, reading-room, theatre, concert room, aquarium, and the other various departments are complete and open, we have no doubt they will be largely patronized. The floral decorations on the opening day were beautiful, and we shall refer to them shortly.

The managing director, Mr. Wybrow Robertson, and the secretary, Mr. Bruce Phillips, deserve to be congratulated on the energy they displayed in carrying out the arrangements.

The band attached to the Winter Garden, under the conductorship of Mr. A. Sullivan, and the leadership of Mr. G. Mount, is an admirable one. The acoustic properties of the building are, however, faulty, as was strikingly manifest on the opening day, when the singing of Madame Patey, Miss Edith Wynne, and Mr. Sims Reeves could scarcely be heard, except by those in the immediate neighbourhood of the orchestra.

The magnificent glass roof has been erected by Mr. W. M. Rundle, Westminster Chambers, according to his new system of glazing. This circular roof comprises 50,000 square feet of glass, every pane of which is rather more than five feet square, and the aggregate weight of the glass is computed at fifty tons. Two glaziers, assisted by four labourers, put in the whole of this surface of glass in ten weeks; and it is computed that it has been constructed at a cost of only about one-third of the outlay required for the ridge-and-furrow system of glazing employed at the Crystal Palace, at Sydenham. In this system no putty is used, but sheets of glass are inserted into grooves so formed that the glass shall not be liable to fracture through the effects of expansion or contraction of the metallic framing employed.

The ribs, also, have this peculiarity, that they will carry a way not only the rain water which falls on the roof, but that which arises from the condensation of vapour within the building. Another peculiarity is that the glass covers in both the wood and iron work, which will thus be relieved from the destructive action of the London atmosphere, while externally only a narrow strip of zinc will be seen. This system will work a revolution in a practice of glazing plant structures.

In the event of a square becoming broken at any time, it can be replaced in a few minutes, without the necessity for the workman climbing upon the outside of the roof.

THE DRAMATIC FUND.

MR. ANDREW HALLIDAY presided on Wednesday evening, March 1st, at the 20th anniversary festival of the Dramatic, Musical, and Equestrian Sick Fund, held at Willis's Rooms. The company included Mrs. Stirling, Mr. Anson, Mr. Edward Terry, Miss Claude, Mr. Arthur Swanborough, Miss Bufon, Mr. Charles Harcourt, Miss Behrend, Mr. Murray Marks, Miss Murielle, Mr. D'Oyly Carte, Miss La Feuillade, Mr. Fairlie, Mr. Bashford, and Capt. Dampier.

Mr. Halliday proposed "the health of the Queen," which was received with great heartiness, as was also that of the "The Prince and Princess of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family."

The next toast proposed was that of Mrs. Stirling, who, on rising to reply, said—There was once—say, I am happy to say there had been twice, in London a man—an American—called Jefferson. I don't mean the Jefferson who was President of the United States, but the Jefferson, better known by his original name of Rip Van Winkle. If that illustrious Rip, some twenty years ago, had attended at this dinner, and had been driven by the too-loud tongue of his thrifty wife out of this room because he insisted on giving too much to this Dramatic and Equestrian Sick Fund, and had wandered forth into St. James's Park; and there had slept a sleep of twenty years, and thence been awakened by some bobby of the future and ordered to "move on" like poor Jo, what

changes would have met the his eye! In Trafalgar Square he would see Landseer's lions not merely in their places, but with their necks and backs worn smooth by the rough riding they have had in vindication of the indefeasible British right of public meeting. Then what a host of new theatres!—two out of three of them, I am told, doing an immense legitimate business, and, ten to one an Othello in full blast inside them. Other novelties would perplex the wandering Rip—skating rinks, spelling bees, etc. But there is one thing in which Rip would have found no change. If he left me at Willis's Rooms returning thanks for the ladies and pleading the cause of this Fund he would have found me, after twenty years' sleep, at the same work still, like the daughter of the Horseleech, uttering my annual cry of "Give, give!" a cry that I must utter. You know how real and widespread the need is; you will give to its relief to-night, as you have always given, liberally. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, you have drunk my health as the mouthpiece of my sister artists, for which I thank you. As I began with Rip, I will end with him, and so "here is your good helms, unt your family, unt may dey live long unt prosper."

Other toasts disposed of, the room was cleared for dancing.

The Fund, it is stated, has been twenty years in existence, and during that time 20,640 days of sickness have been relieved, 558 loans for journeys advanced, and 480 cases of distress assisted.

EXILED FROM HOME.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PIETRO appeared to muse for a few moments, and then said:

"What became of the girl? It was a girl, I have heard. Did she die?"

"No, she is living," rejoined Mrs. Quillet.

"Is she here?" asked Pietro, eagerly.

"No, she is not."

"You put her in an asylum?" inquired the Maltese, disappointedly.

"Not so. We educated her, my husband and I," said Mrs. Quillet. "And a week or two ago she left us!"

"She is educated? She went away to become a governess, I suppose?"

"I believe that was her intention," declared the housekeeper, determined to admit to him only so much as he could readily learn from any country gossip, and to defend Miss Markham's reputation to the last.

The announcement that the girl had been educated rather dashed the spirits of the Maltese; for if she were educated she might hold herself as beyond his reach. But he reflected that Mrs. Quillet might call the merest smattering of ordinary school-learning an "education." And, besides, the girl's origin would prevent her rising very far above him. In fact he would prefer her to have the varnish of a ladylike seeming.

"Where is she now?" he inquired.

Now Gwen's whereabouts could not be discovered from any one in Yorkshire; only the butler and his wife knew her address. And because of young Orkney's persistent attempts to discover it, and for other reasons, they had resolved to keep it secret. Mrs. Quillet saw no reason to break this resolve for the enlightenment of this foreigner. She did not like his appearance. It was clear that he had known Miss Markham, and was conversant with the mystery of her fate, but it was equally clear that he did not intend to reveal his knowledge. Why, therefore, should she tell him what she knew?

Moreover, she reflected that he had said, or intimated, that Miss Markham had not been married. There was no one then who had any right to the girl that could compare with her right. She decided not to give him Gwen's address.

"What do you want of her?" she asked.

"That I will tell her," he answered.

"I decline to tell you where she is," said the housekeeper. "No one has any right to. She is nothing to you!"

"I know her paternity," said the Maltese. "I know all about her. I demand her address."

"And I refuse to give it! That is, unless you give me good reasons for wanting it."

Pietro was not prepared with "good reasons." He flamed up with anger.

"I have learned what I wanted to know," he declared. "I can find out her name from any one in the neighbourhood. As to the rest, I can find out her address easily enough. I have only to question the station-master or ticket-seller at Penistone station. She went away only a week or two ago! I shall have no difficulty in finding her."

And quite satisfied with what he had learned and the beginning he had made, Lord Darkwood's valet departed to pursue his investigations elsewhere.

Gwen had gone to London.

Expelled from Lonemoor, the only home she had ever known, her enemies cruel and relentless, her friends cold and unsympathizing, Gwen's thoughts had turned to her old governess, the best and truest friend she had ever possessed.

Miss Grainger, it will be remembered, had married a poor curate, and now resided in one of the suburbs of the great metropolis.

"She will find me something to do," the girl thought. "I must earn my own support hereafter. I would never have allowed the Quilletes to support me as they have done if I had known."

She had unfolded her plan to the old housekeeper when the two had retired to her chamber after the stormy interview with the bailiff. And Mrs. Quillet approved her resolve.

"I suppose it will be best," the old woman said, with a sigh. "I am tired of this continual fighting with the Orkneys. You have no society here, Miss Gwen, no one to talk to, nothing to occupy you. You must stay with Mrs. Myner until we can hear from the squire. Then, if he will do nothing for you, you can see about becoming a governess."

Gwen made no audible objection, but she had not the slightest intention of waiting "to hear from the squire." Nothing could have induced her to accept clarity from a person she had never seen, and whom she believed to be no relation to her. And any aid from Squire Markham she would have termed charity.

"I don't think you will hear from the squire, Mrs. Quillet," she said. "There is one thing I must say to you before I go. I am very grateful for all that you have done for me—for the money you have spent upon my education especially. I shall never cease to be grateful, although I regard those sums spent for me as simply a loan which I shall repay one day with interest."

"As you like about that, Miss Gwen," replied Mrs. Quillet. "You may feel as independent as you please, and pay the money back if you have it to spare ever, but at the same time you are quite welcome to it, and John and I don't look for repayment. What we did was done from a sense of duty. Your poor mother was a lady, and we couldn't allow her child to be brought up as a servant."

Gwen stooped and kissed the old woman impulsively, and then turned away in silence. Mrs. Quillet packed the girl's box while the latter put on her travelling costume.

"Miss Gwen," said the housekeeper, when her task had been completed and they were ready to descend. "You can't be too particular about your conduct in the great world into which you are going. I don't like young Orkney's looks, nor his unreasonable pursuit of you. They say he is going up to London. He will seek you out unless we conceal your address. I shall caution John to tell no one. Be on your guard also."

Gwen promised, and the two went below.

Gwen departed in the old pony-chaise with the old butler, as we have mentioned. Young Orkney made an attempt to follow her, to urge anew his suit, but his father detained him, imploring him not to disgrace his family, and threatening, if he went after the girl, to disown him as a son, and cast him off with a shilling.

Believing that he could discover Gwen's retreat, Claxton made a virtue of necessity and submitted to his father's commands.

The butler drove briskly to Penistone. As they passed over the moor he gave Gwen counsel similar to that his wife had given her, urging her to keep her refuge a secret, and asked her how much money she possessed.

"I have three pounds left from my school allowance," answered Gwen. "That will take me to London."

"But you must not arrive there penniless, Miss Gwen. Here are fifty pounds I got out of my wife's tea-caddy. She meant it for your winter outfit and the like. You can repay it some day if you wish, but I insist upon your taking it now."

He drew from his pocket a small canvas bag filled with gold coins. Gwen hesitated. Her pride tempted her to refuse it, but she reflected that she might need it, and the butler's offer of the sum as a loan saved her pride.

"I will take it, and thank you, Mr. Quillet," she

said. "I shall repay it, and all the money you have spent upon me. I shall deny myself every luxury until you are repaid. But money can never pay you for your goodness to me. I shall never forget your kindness, nor cease to be grateful for it!"

There were tears in her purple-dusk eyes that attested her sincerity.

She put the little canvas bag in her pocket, and Mr. Quillet occupied the time during the remainder of the drive in giving her such respectful and kindly counsels as a trustworthy old family servant might well have given his inexperienced young mistress under the like circumstances.

They arrived at Penistone in time to catch the London express.

Mr. Quillet placed his charge in a ladies' compartment, first-class, put her ticket in her hand, and bade her good-bye.

He was sorely tempted to go up to town with her. She was too young, too beautiful, and too innocent to travel alone.

But his enemies—he counted the Orkneys and the lawyer as such in these days—were at Lonemoor in his absence.

He was anxious to return to them and to his wife. Gwen's destiny seemed to have been taken out of his hands. It might be best to let her battle with life at once. She must fight for herself hereafter.

And so he let her go away alone.

He waited until the train had steamed out of the station and was fairly on its way southward, and then he re-entered his chaise and drove homewards.

Gwen settled herself in a seat by one of the windows and gave herself up to her reflections.

She had three fellow-passengers, who had entered the compartment before herself, an elderly lady, a little girl, and a maid-servant.

The child slept, the elderly lady read a novel, and the maid looked out upon the landscape. None of them paid any attention to Gwen, after the first scrutiny at her apparel.

Our heroine had been very miserable at Lonemoor. Her life had seemed for ever darkened. But the excitement and novelty of her journey, the complete breaking-off of the old life, the uncertainty of the new, were especially healthful for her.

She felt her interest in life returning. True, her lover had proved false—so she thought—true, her origin was disgraceful—true, that she was friendless, yet, after all, she ought to bear her trials bravely and cheerfully. The Cross here—the Crown here—after!

Not all this did she say to herself at once, however. She had an heroic soul, but the lesson of resignation is not easily learnt. She was one to feel deeply, and deep feelings are not soonest dissipated.

Her fellow travellers, did not address one word to her throughout that day.

She might have been a stock or stone for all the interest they displayed towards her, or the notice they took of her. She was equally silent.

The train steamed into the London terminus just at nightfall.

A slight mist was falling. The guard assisted Gwen out last of all, and motioned to a cabman, to whose care Gwen committed herself.

She took her travelling-bag inside the vehicle, and the driver put her trunk upon the box beside him.

"What address?" asked the cabman.

Gwen had kept up an active correspondence with her former governess for years. She replied promptly:

"Northumberland Terrace, Queen street, Notting Hill."

The cab started. As it moved out of the station another cab entered hastily to catch the night express about to start northward.

Gwen, looking from the window, half-hidden by the little flapping curtain, beheld the occupant of that other cab, and her heart gave a great bound, and she sank back white and faint.

For the occupant of that cab was Ronald Chilton, the lover who had wooed her on the Yorkshire moor, and who hearing, her story, had abandoned her.

He looked years older than when she had last seen him. His face was graver than she had known it. A new nobility seemed thronged upon it. Fair and handsome, he looked to her yearning eyes like a demigod.

He did not see her. His cab passed on in haste. Gwen finding strength, sprang to the window and looked after him for one last glimpse. She saw him leap from his cab upon the platform, then her own vehicle rolled out of the station, and he was lost to her view.

CHAPTER XIX.

NORTHUMBERLAND TERRACE, Queen street, was scarcely so ambitious as its name would lead one to believe.

It consisted of a row of dingy brick dwellings, set back at the distance of a few feet from the highway, a strip of green grass running along its front.

Northumberland Terrace was inhabited by struggling professional men, a half-pay army officer or two, and the like.

The destination of Gwen was occupied by Mr. Myner, the curate who had become the husband of Miss Grainger, Gwen's former governess.

Mr. Myner's health had grown infirm within the last year or two. He had waited many years to acquire an income sufficient to justify him in taking a wife, but scarcely had he married when that hardly won stipend had failed him. Some one with more influence than he had desired to obtain the curacy in which he had become settled, and money and influence had effected his dismissal and the instalment of their possessor in his stead.

No other preferment offered itself to him. He had friends, however, and by their advice he had established a family school, for boys under the age of twelve years, the number of pupils being limited to twenty.

The income derived from this source was not excessive, while expenses were many and heavy.

Masters in various branches must be secured, servants must be hired, fuel and lights must be paid for, rent was high, and boys, however small, must be fed. And so, at the year's end, when the Rev. Mr. Myner and his wife sat down with their great pile of bills to compare the outgo with the income, they found that they had made their living out of their school, but that they had not a hundred pounds beyond to secure them against that "rainy day," the dread of which haunts so many struggling lives.

Gwen knew of the little school, but Mrs. Myner, had never given expressions in her letters to any anxieties, and the girl could not guess how many troubles her old governess was enduring.

But Gwen was not coming to be a burden upon the energies of her friends, but rather to seek counsel and assistance in the task of earning her own living.

The cab drew up at the kerbstone and the cabman descended, ran up the walk, and pulled the bell. By the time the door opened and a neat housemaid in a spotless white cap appeared upon the threshold, Gwen had placed her face in the cabman's hands and had alighted. She hurried through the mist over the wet and slippery stones, shining now in the light that streamed from the hallway, and stood upon the wide stone step.

"Does Mrs. Myner live here?" she inquired.

The housemaid answered in the affirmative.

Gwen beckoned the cabman to bring her trunk, the housemaid staring open-mouthed at the unexpected intrusion.

"Will you tell Mrs. Myner that an old friend wishes to see her?" said Gwen, with that sweet and gentle courtesy which distinguished her.

"Yes, miss. Step into the reception-room and I will call her," replied the maid.

She ushered the visitor into a room at her right and hurried on her errand.

The coachman deposited the trunk in the hall with a bang and departed, slamming the door behind him.

The room into which Gwen had been shown was drawing and reception room in one. Its windows fronted the grass-plot in front of the house. It was plainly furnished, but with due regard for comfort. Upon either side of the chimney were low, wide book-cases well filled with books. A few engravings of Scriptural subjects adorned the white walls. A wide chintz-covered lounge, chintz-covered easy-chairs, and long chintz curtains, all of a deep red colour, and all spotlessly neat, gave a cozy aspect to the apartment. The coziness was increased by the bright glow of the well-kept fire and its reflection upon the well-swept fender.

No doubt of her reception enticed Gwen's mind. She knew that her governess had really and tenderly loved her, and she believed that this house would prove to her a very haven of refuge.

Nor was she doomed to disappointment.

The rustling of garments was heard in the hallway, and Mrs. Myner entered the room.

She was a very tall, very thin lady, with a gentle face and gentle manners. She had a sad and subdued expression, as if her cares weighed heavily upon her. But she was cheerful also. Her courage never failed, even when her husband grew dis-

couraged. Patient, brave, and hopeful, she was a "well-spring of pleasure" in the house, a true wife and a mother to the boys under her charge.

Gwen arose at her approach. The girl did not speak, waiting for recognition.

Three years had wrought considerable change in our young heroine. Mrs. Myner surveyed the slight, elegant figure, the graceful head, with its massive ripple of bronze-coloured hair, the straight Greek features, the sad yet smiling mouth, in doubt and bewilderment. But when her gaze met the full glance of those purple-dark eyes, now with great lights glowing in their sombre depths, Mrs. Myner knew her visitor.

"Gwen!" she ejaculated, in amazement and delight. "Little Gwen!"

She opened her arms and the girl flew into them and was clasped in a fond and tender embrace.

"How you have grown!" exclaimed the lady, pushing Gwen away to look at her, and then embracing her again. "Three years has made a great change in you. You have grown into a young lady, and a very lovely one, too, my dear. But where is your escort? Who came with you?"

"I came alone," answered Gwen, when she had been released, and the two sat down together upon the little chintz-covered lounge. "I have no home, Mrs. Myner, and no friend in all the world but you."

Mrs. Myner looked anxious.

"Why, what has happened, my dear?" she asked. "Are the Quillets dead? Or has the squire returned from his travels?"

"The Quillets are well," answered Gwen, "and the squire is still abroad. But Lonsmoor has ceased to be a home for me. I have been turned from its shelter."

"My dear, I cannot understand."

"I never knew until recently that I was not a relative of Squire Markham," said Gwen, "I was brought up in his house as if I had been his daughter or niece. I had a governess, handsome rooms, and was served by the Quillets as if I were their mistress. I was sent to a Paris pensionnat of the very highest class. How could I suspect that I was the creature of their bounty? How could I suspect?"

"Then you know all?" exclaimed Mrs. Myner.

"Do you know?"

"Yes, my dear. I know all there is to 'know of your history.'"

"You know that I am the child of a wandering, insane woman, who perished on the moor in a storm, and lies buried in Penistone churchyard?"

"Yes my dear. I have seen your mother's grave. You visited it with me in your childhood, never dreaming whose grave it was. Do you remember that lonely mound in the far corner of the churchyard, with the broken slab at its head?"

"With the name 'Magdalen' upon it?" cried Gwen, her recollections presenting the picture to her in all its details. "Was that my mother's grave?"

Mrs. Myner replied by a gentle caress that meant assent.

The hot blood rushed to Gwen's cheeks.

"Who put that name upon the stone?" she asked. "Who dared mark her grave with that name?"

"The Quillets, my dear! the same people who cared for you, and gave you all the advantages you have enjoyed."

Gwen was silenced.

Mrs. Myner gently removed the girl's hat and drew her nearer to her as she said:

"My dear child, you must have known the truth sooner or later. I always dreaded the hour when you should learn it. There was some mystery about your mother which I have never been able to penetrate. When I went to Lonsmoor as your governess, in response to the advertisement of Mr. Quillet, I soon perceived that something was wrong. The butler and the housekeeper treated you as to their superior, and I supposed you a relative of Squire Markham. One day a word dropped by a servant made me aware that there was a mystery about you. I went to the Quillets at once and demanded an explanation. They told me what they seem now to have told you."

"And you stayed on and cared for me and loved me!" cried Gwen. "That revelation made no difference in your treatment of me! I must have been blind and deaf. I never suspected anything wrong!"

"How have you discovered the truth at last?"

Gwen replied by telling in passionate words the history of her life since leaving school. She told of the persecutions of the Orkneys, of the harshness of the Quillets—yet speaking of the latter with all gratitude—and of that final scene which had resulted in her expulsion from Lonsmoor.

Perhaps it was too soon for deeper confidences. At any rate, she made no allusion to the lover she had won and lost, and whom she had so lately seen.

"Poor child! Poor child!" said Mrs. Myner softly. "You did right to come to me, little Gwen. I have two babies of my own upstairs, bright little boys, and you shall be a third child to me. My home shall be yours, I have wished for a daughter!"

But the good lady sighed as she uttered the words. She loved Gwen, bright, impulsive, warm-hearted Gwen, but another mouth to feed and another form to clothe would make their small savings still smaller, and it would be harder than ever to "make both ends meet."

She could scarcely afford herself the luxury and the delight of having this beautiful high-bred girl an inmate of her home.

Gwen read her thoughts.

"I will be a daughter to you, dear Mrs. Myner," she exclaimed, "but you must let me work just as you would let your own daughter, you know. If you can make me of use in your school, let me stay with you. If you have no need of me, will you help me to a situation as governess? I want work, I will not sit down in idleness."

"We will talk all this over more at our leisure, my dear. You must be tired after your journey. How inconsiderate I am to plunge into a conversation while you are tired and hungry! Did you come from Yorkshire to-day? And alone?"

Gwen assented.

"I must learn to take care of myself," she said, brightly. "I began this morning."

"It is singular that the Quillets allowed you to come alone. Their action in doing so does not accord with their previous care of you. My dear," inquired Mrs. Myner, suddenly, "do you think it possible that the Quillets had any suspicion of your mother's actual identity?"

Gwen started.

"I think it impossible," she said. "They told me she never uttered a coherent speech while at Lonsmoor, and that there was no mark upon her clothing, and nothing whatever about her that could lead to any clue to her real name or position. Only her manners and appearance proclaimed her a lady."

"I am greatly puzzled," remarked Mrs. Myner. "I could never understand why the Quillets did so much for you. They never loved you, dear. That you know. Why then did they educate you? Why did they spend so much money upon you? Why did they serve you so respectfully, as if they felt you their superior? Could it be that they invested their money as in a speculation—expecting to receive it again with interest? Could it be that, believing your mother a lady, they fancied that some day some rich relation would step forward and claim you and reimburse them?"

"It is possible," said Gwen, and then she added:

"Yet I know that they never advertised for the friends of your unfortunate mother. They never tried to discover your relatives. It is all a mystery to me, Gwen, and the conduct of the Quillets is as mysterious as the rest. And how they dared make so free with the squire's property amazes me. I should think they would have feared his return and his anger. The squire was childless, I believe."

"He had one daughter—Miss Constance Markham," said poor Gwen, innocently, "but she died in Berlin, eighteen years ago—a year before I was born. She was very beautiful. It was her death that changed the squire and made him a wanderer."

"It is all very strange, dear, but we won't puzzle our heads over it longer. You shall belong to us henceforth, little Gwen. I haven't fine rooms and a maid to offer you, dear, but we have warm hearts and a snug home, and you shall have a place in both. Now let me take you upstairs. You shall have a cup of tea and then make the acquaintance of Mr. Myner."

She conducted her guest up a narrow staircase, to a small bedroom upon the second-floor. It was a pretty little chamber, with a low tent bedstead with white draperies, and with toilet appurtenances.

"This is our guest-chamber, dear," explained the hostess, lighting a candle which stood in a tall candlestick on a shelf. "Now make yourself comfortable while I go to tell my husband who is here. I will come for you."

With a kiss Mrs. Myner withdrew.

Gwen bathed her face and hands, brushed her rippling bronze hair, and replaced her collar and cuffs with fresh ones, her hand-bag containing all toilet necessities.

By the time she was dressed two stout serving women appeared with her trunk. A little later one of them reappeared with a small tray, covered with a white napkin, upon which were spread a dish of toasted muffins, a mutton chop, and a tiny pot of tea.

Gwen did justice to this refreshment, having eaten nothing all day. When she had finished, Mrs. Rayner appeared, finding her strengthened by her repast and looking more cheerful than before.

"We will go down now to Mr. Myner," said the curate's wife. "He is in the school-room, busy with the copy-books. The pupils are all in bed, and now comes our happy hour, although it is still a busy one!"

They descended to the lower floor again.

Mrs. Myner conducted her guest to a back-room, divided from the reception-room by an unusually thick partition.

This back room was the school-room.

It was long and was provided with desks and benches. At one end of the room, upon a raised platform, was the desk of the head teacher. And here with a single tallow candle burning dimly at his elbow, sat Mr. Myner engaged in writing copies.

He arose at the entrance of his wife with her guest.

He was tall, of spare figure, round-shouldered, and stooping, with a care-worn visage. He wore spectacles and his aspect was scholarly. He walked with a shambling gait, and his garments were almost threadbare. The world had evidently frowned upon the Rev. Thomas Myner, but there was no shadow of repining upon his ragged features. Like his wife, he was patient and hopeful under all the discouragements.

"Thomas!" said Mrs. Myner, "this is the little pupil of whom I have spoken to you so often—the little girl I left to marry you—Miss Gwen Winter."

"I am glad to see you, Miss Winter," said Mr. Myner, cordially, shaking hands with her. "You are welcome here. I have heard so much of you that I feel already acquainted with you."

He placed chairs for her and his wife, and then running his fingers through his sparse locks he resumed his own seat.

"Miss Gwen is to be a daughter to us, Thomas," said Mrs. Myner. "She puts herself in our hands. I hope that we may be able to keep her with us. She is too young to go out into the world!"

"Strange!" said the curate, regarding Gwen reflectively. "Miss Winter reminds me strongly of some one I have seen or known. I could almost believe that I had seen you before, Miss Winter. The likeness of yours to another face that I have seen grows upon me. Yet I cannot remember."

He passed his hand over his forehead wearily. "I never saw a face like Gwen's," said Mrs. Myner, eagerly. "Oh, I wish you could remember, Thomas."

"I wish I could. But I can't," said Mr. Myner. "I fancy that—if I could remember—we might have some clue to all this mystery you've been telling me about, my dear. It may come to me—the name, I mean. But it eludes me now. Let us talk of Miss Gwen and her future. What are we to do with her?"

He smiled benignantly upon his visitor as he asked the question, but none the less terribly did the words ring in the ears of the three—what were they to do with Gwen?

CHAPTER XX.

Lord Darkwood's valet had no difficulty in finding out the name of Miss Markham's child. A gratuity to the hostler who brought up his horse and vehicle, as he came out from his interview with Mrs. Quillet, and a question or two, put him in possession of her name.

"Miss Gwendoline Winter! Hum!" he said, impressing the name upon his mind. "That has a fine sound. And Miss Winter is the child of that woman who came here seventeen years ago, and a month later wandered away and died on the moor in a snow-storm?"

"The same, sir," replied the hostler. "She looks the real lady, and carries herself as such. She's high and mighty for her beginnings, is Miss Gwen."

"Ah! Has she a lover?" asked the Maltese, carelessly, climbing into his spring-cart.

"Two on 'em, sir," was the answer, delivered with a broad grin. "Young Mr. Orkney is mad after her. He's gone up to Lannon to look her up, which Mr. Quillet wouldn't tell him her address."

"She went to London then?"

"So they says, sir, but what friends she have in London, as she have no friends anywhere, can't be told. Belike she goes to some relation of the Quillets. But they be closed-mouthed, the butler and the housekeeper, and naught be known of miss's doings."

"Who is young Mr. Orkney?"

"The bailiff's son, sir, which his father is mad at him for looking so far below him. And there was a gentleman over at the shooting-lodge that made love to her, too, but he went away sudden. He came back here the very day after miss went away, dressed all in mourning, but he got no satisfaction from any one here, and he went away that disappointed that he looked glantly!"

"Two lovers!" mused Pietro, taking up the reins.

"She must be handsome, eh?"

"Yes, she looks well enough, but she's not to my taste," said the hostler. "Meg yonder suits me better."

The valet touched up his horse and drove out of the yard.

As he crossed the wide expanse of moor he indulged in various speculations in regard to Gwen, and determined anew to make her his wife.

The fact that she had two suitors, in spite of the circumstances of her history, proved that she must be attractive, and made her all the more desirable as a prize.

Besides, he knew her history, and would have married her, had he been able to accomplish the event, had she been lame, blind and hideous.

At the Penistone station he readily confirmed the hostler's assertion—Miss Winter had gone to London.

Accordingly he took himself to London.

But there his search was blocked. Many young women arrive in London daily, and how was one out of so many to be traced? He could not give the exact day of her arrival, and the station-master and guards could render him no assistance. The cabmen, whom he interrogated could not assist him. He could not describe Gwen, and he found that he might as well look for a needle in a haystack, to use the old simile, as to search in London for a young woman whom he had never seen.

"I shall have to go back to Yorkshire and begin the thing all over again," he muttered. "I must find the girl. I will inquire what people she has known, what relatives the Quillets have, and if the girl has been at school. But first of all I will go back to Danholm Castle. I must take care not to excite the signor's suspicions, or he'll lead this search and find her before me!"

He returned to Shropshire with convenient speed.

He found the new Lord Darkwood settled in his dignities and delighted with his lot. His lordship had already put into execution his early resolve to greatly increase the value of his rent-roll. He had summoned his land-agent to a private conference, and had informed him that as fast as the leases matured the rent of the farms must be increased one-third. The land-agent remonstrated in vain; the marquis was inexorable. He had also ordered the land-agent to increase forthwith the rents of the labourers' cottages, of the cottages and houses in the village, and of all the buildings, including mills, inns and shops, belonging to the Darkwood estate.

"The tenants will never stand it, my lord," said the land-agent, respectfully. "The late marquis considered their interests and delighted in their prosperity."

"Bother the late marquis!" interrupted the new lord. "Things will be very different now from what they were in his time, I can tell you. I shall grind the tenants down to the last penny. No Quixotism for me! 'Get all you can,' is a good motto."

"But more suited to a grasping usurer than to a noble lord of almost unbounded wealth," thought the land-agent. "He need scarcely be said that he kept this private sentiment to himself."

The servants too, had been made to feel the pressure of the iron hand that now held the Darkwood property. It was very clear that the new lord would not be popular among his servants and tenantry.

The Maltese valet slipped quietly back into his place as "gentleman's gentleman."

Lord Darkwood made some inquiry after his brother, and seemed satisfied with Pietro's reply, but in reality he was secretly dissatisfied.

Fraternal affection was not one of the valet's weaknesses.

The marquis did not believe that he had gone up

to London for no other purpose than to see a brother who was ill.

And if he did not go for that purpose, why did he go? And why had he assigned a false reason for his going?

"I fancy the fellow has some scheme going on," the marquis thought, uneasily, upon the very day and just before Pietro's return. "And it must be a scheme he means to keep secret from me! His interest and mine are the same. He knows things about me that would utterly destroy me, but he has been mixed up in most of them. He would make more money to stick to me. Is there any way he can make any considerable sum in going against me?"

The marquis reflected, and a cold perspiration started on his forehead.

"Can he have any idea of working up that Markham affair?" he thought. "Could he have gone up to Yorkshire to look after that girl?"

The thought seemed to inspire him with a lively terror.

"Impossible!" he ejaculated. "He hasn't the brains for such scheming! He can't have gone there. How would he expect to make money out of her? I am too suspicious—yet I can't rid myself of the haunting fear. By Jove, if he goes away again I'll have him watched. I'll watch him after he returns. If he thinks to play the traitor to me, he'll find me on my guard."

Yet when the valet appeared the marquis betrayed no curiosity, and seemed to have no interest in his journey. Still, Pietro soon became aware—more by instinct than otherwise—that his master was keeping a keen yet furtive watch upon him, and that his lordship felt a secret distrust of him.

"He can't suspect what I'm after," thought the Maltese. "He'd never think me deep enough to look after that girl. I must be on my guard. I shall not dare venture up to Yorkshire again at present, and I may have to send my brother on a scout for me."

About an hour after Pietro's return Lord Darkwood, in full evening dress, for he was very punctilious about forms and ceremonies, descended to the drawing-room. He was to dine alone, but loneliness in the midst of his novel grandeur had not become distasteful to him.

He paced up and down the apartment, watching his reflection in the various mirrors, in a supreme self-containment. How all his ambition had been gratified! All his wildest hopes realized! He was a peer of the realm, wealthy almost beyond compute, honoured, a power in the land. Now he would seek a wife fit to mate with a Lord of Darkwood; he would fill this stately home with guests; he would make a sensation in the fashionable world.

All these thoughts passed through his mind as he walked to and fro. And then darker thoughts succeeded.

"I wonder if Constance's child lives," he said to himself. "If she were only dead! But if she lives I ought to know it. I must know it. I must get her out of the way, so that I need not fear the possible machinations of Pietro or any other. If the old squire were to return and try to pick out the tangled thread of all this mystery, he might find me! I'll get rid of that girl. I'll put it out of any person's power to cause me harm through her."

He set his mouth in a hard and terrible expression and his round fat face darkened with a hideous meaning.

He was still intent upon his subject when the sound of carriage wheels on the drive without disturbed his meditations. He listened, with an instinctive apprehension that something was wrong. His apprehensions were doomed to be verified. There was a noise of an arrival, a flutter and confusion in the hall, the sound of flying feet, the door was burst open, and his daughter from Malta, Miss Georgina Tollish, burst into his presence.

(To be continued.)

CLAIRVOYANTES reap a rich harvest in Paris where they number over 2,000. Of these, thirty, it is calculated, earn 24,000l. per annum.

A NOTICEABLE feature in the spirit-market just now is the introduction of a neutral spirit from Russia, which we learn is being sold extensively at 1s. 1d. per gallon—about 1s. per gallon less than British grain spirit, and cheaper even than the German spirit distilled from potatoes, which has hitherto been so largely sold. This new spirit, when flavoured and sweetened, will doubtless enter into consumption through the public-houses, under the name either of, in, rum, whisky, or brandy.



[MAGGIE'S SACRIFICE.]

THE TRIAL BY FIRE.

LITTLE Mrs. Manning was as dainty a bit of woman-kind as it would be possible to find.

Petite and graceful, charming in figure, face and manner, she was the light of her own home, as well as of society.

And yet, pure, innocent, lovely as she was, the breath of envy did not pass her by.

Disappointed rivals declared that she was selfish, heartless and recklessly extravagant; and that ere long Horace Manning's vast wealth would be as water spilled upon desert sands, through her vanity and wastefulness.

But the gentleman in question did not appear to be troubled with any of these misgivings, for he was seldom long absent from the side of his sparkling little wife, and his tender devotion was the subject of remark wherever they went; while the lovelight which danced in her eyes whenever they chanced to meet his was not to be mistaken for anything but genuine love for him personally and not for his fortune.

But was she selfish, heartless, and recklessly extravagant? Certainly not selfish and heartless. Extravagant? Perhaps some who looked only at the surface might think so, but extravagance is a relative term. She did love jewels and fine lace and spent a great deal of money on them, but then she had a splendid allowance and could afford to do it. Her husband not only encouraged her in such outlays but was continually making her gifts, unasked, of rare diamonds and priceless old lace. What would have been folly in a poor man was not so with him. He liked to see her adorned like a queen, and he wronged no one in so adorning her. Is it not, moreover, as much the duty of the really rich to spend as it is of the poor to economize? How can the poor live at all if the rich live meanly?

They had been married now five years, and in all that time had never exchanged a hard word. Pros-

perity, too, had continued to smile on them. Only on her last birthday her husband had given Maggie a superb necklace of diamonds.

As she kissed him for the gift she had said: "Ah, though I love the glittering things, I love you, Horace, a thousand times more."

The terrible fire in 1872 will long be remembered. In a single night hundreds were made homeless and hundreds more were ruined in fortune.

In that terrible conflagration Horace Manning was one of the principal sufferers.

Nearly all his worldly wealth vanished in a few hours, while hundreds who were dependent upon him for their daily bread were thrown out of employment with their wages unpaid.

For thirty hours he neither slept nor tasted food, but stood and watched with aching heart and reeling brain that terrible conflagration.

Then, bowed down and broken, he sought his home, and there groaned out the agony which he could no longer control.

"Horace, husband, why will you give way thus? All is not gone, while you are left; and Maggie and I will help you bear to it."

So spoke his fond wife, drawing his throbbing head upon her bosom, and kissing, with quivering lips, the deep lines which these long hours of suffering had stamped upon his brow.

"What is the loss of our wealth," she continued, "compared to what the loss of health or the love which we bear each other would be?"

"Ah, but you don't know, my darling, how dreadful it is to be poor. You have never known a care. What could these little white hands do towards earning your daily bread?"

"They can do a great deal. And I begin to think that their very whiteness is a shame to me. They ought to have known long ago how to wash and iron, bake and brew and sew, and have made ready for such an emergency as this."

Your anticipated poverty, Horace, does not daunt me in the least. It but draws me closer to

you, with feeling that perhaps I can now be to you true help-meet, instead of the idle almost useless plaything which I have been. I doubt not that the lesson will be hard to learn at first, but I am ready to begin; and with a cheerful willingness, I think I can surmount any obstacle. While I have your love and confidence I am happy. Take these from me, and I shall be crushed. So do not grieve for me."

And that strong man could only gather the brave little comforter in his arms and weep as only strong men do weep.

"Bless you!" he said, when he could speak. "But though you have comforted me more than I can tell you, my heart is bursting for my people. Oh, my people. Oh, my poor people! Pay-day is at hand, and I have not a shilling with which to pay them."

"Ah! your people. For the moment I had forgotten them," murmured Maggie, with an expression of dismay.

Then suddenly brightening, she asked, eagerly: "How much do you owe them, Horace? How much would it take to pay them all?"

"From ten to twelve hundred pounds. How little a sum that seemed to me three days ago! And now I would almost give my right hand for it. For I know that some of those poor fellows must go hungry unless they are paid. Oh, Maggie, it is almost more than I can bear! It nearly drives me mad!"

"Horace," returned his wife, solemnly, though she was pale as death, "we have always professed to believe in an overruling Power; and now I tell you that Heaven will provide. It seems dark now, but I feel that all will, before long, be made right. Tell me, could you know that every man had his month's wages, would you be comforted?"

"Inexpressibly, now that you bear it all so bravely. And I suppose that some time in the future I shall get something on the insurance. But it seems terrible, all this fearful waste of property."

"I wish you would try not to think of it. Can you not go to sleep? Rest here a few minutes, and I will bring you a strong cup of coffee to brace up your shattered nerves."

She gently lowered his head upon the pillow and then glided from the room.

Twenty minutes passed and she was back again, bearing a cup of fragrant Mocha.

"Now drink this, dearest, to please me."

He could not resist her, and drank it to the dregs.

"You did make it strong, Maggie," he said, "for it was almost bitter; but I feel it will do me good."

A queer expression curled his wife's lips at his remark, and the quick colour for a moment flushed her delicate cheek.

But setting the cup aside, she gently smoothed his head, until, beneath her light touch, he fell asleep.

Then up she sprang, all strength and nerve, gave a hasty glance at her watch and began hastily to array herself in a dark travelling robe.

Her next move was to unlock an elegant casket which stood upon her dressing-table, from which she took set after set of costly jewels.

These she fastened about her person and clothing and then rang her bell.

Soon a light tap upon the door answered her summons, and, going just outside the room, she found, as she expected, her maid.

"Mary," she began, in low, hurried tones, "can I trust you to follow implicitly the directions I am about to give you?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered the girl, quietly.

"I thought I might. I am going away. It is now eight o'clock, and I shall be just in time to catch the train. I want you to tell your master when he awakes that I am out, but that I will soon be back and that I told you to bring him a cup of tea. And, Mary, I want you to put a teaspoonful from this phial into the tea. He is so exhausted that he will be very ill unless he sleeps a long time. Will you remember?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I shall be back to-morrow evening," she went on. "I do not wish Mr. Manning, under any circumstances, to know where I have gone. Are you sure you understand?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, then, send James around at once with the carriage, for I have no time to lose."

Another moment and Maggie Manning, the devoted wife, was speeding rapidly toward London.

The brave little woman did not sleep until her goal was reached, her business transacted and she had returned home again. Then hearing that, although her husband had twice aroused and asked for her, he was now sleeping again, she lay down and snatched an hour or two of rest.

She was at length awakened by her maid, who said that Mr. Manning had woken again and was anxiously asking for her.

She rose, bathed her wan face and hastened to him.

"Maggie, I think—I am sure I have been drugged," were his first words. "Did you do it?" "Yes, dear, I did," she answered, bravely, "and I know you'll forgive me, for you sadly needed rest, and your nerves were so wrought up that sleep, without an anodyne, was next to an impossibility. Besides, I could not accomplish what I wished to do unless I had you obediently under this little thumb of mine," she added, laughingly, with a spice of the old mischief that had attracted him so when she was a girl.

"What do you mean?" he asked, astonished. "I mean that I have been to London and back again since I saw you last."

"To London and back? Are you crazy?"

"I think not. Now listen, dear, and I will explain all. You said you would be inexpressibly comforted if you could only pay your servant, and that it would take from ten to twelve hundred pounds to do it. I know my jewels were very valuable, for I own that I have been fond of jewels. When we could afford it it was all very well, but now—"

She stopped a moment, and then went on:

"So I determined to take them all to London, where most of them were purchased, and sell them. There would be no chance of selling them here just now, you know. I have been very successful. Brother Walter transacted all the business for me. Here, dear, are two thousand pounds, and you can now lift that heavy burden from your heart."

She drew a package from her bosom and put it into his hands.

"Maggie, Maggie, darling! You have sacrificed all those for me!"

He could say no more, but drew her to him, and for awhile there was a holy silence in that room, each heart being too full for words.

"Sacrifice!" at length Maggie answered. "It was no sacrifice, Horace. I remember five years ago when you gave me that necklace. I was nearly, yes, entirely overcome by your lavishness; and I kissed the gems, and said to myself that you were more precious to me than jewels; and Heaven knows I would rather never wear another ornament, or bit of lace—my too especial weaknesses, you know," she added, smiling, "than see you suffer as you have the last few days. Believe me, I have been truly happy in doing this."

Her looks did not belie her words, for her beautiful face glowed with a light of self-sacrifice that was almost holy.

"You have indeed proved that your love for me is above jewels, though of that I never questioned. But of the strength and depth of character which you have shown I had never dreamed. I can now believe that you will not shrink at the idea of being a poor man's wife."

"Shrink! No! I can stand at your side, as long as you will stand; but when you allow yourself to be crushed, then I must fall too; for you are my strength, my pride, my glory. This is only one of the furnaces in which we are being tried; and I feel we shall both come out purer and better."

Her words were a prophecy. Fortune has smiled on them again, and they are happier, too, for having passed for a time through this Trial by Fire.

ONE of the oddest modern developments of commercial enterprise and blacking advertisements is not Othello, as generally believed, but the band of strolling nigger melodists. A distinguished circle of the corps thought fit to pack up bones, banjo, and blacking and follow the Prince of Wales to India, keeping up with the Royal progress as best they could. At the sham light outside Delhi there were all kinds of extraneous attractions. Amongst these a band of European strollers, their faces bedaubed with blacking, their heads covered with woolly wigs, in their hands the familiar banjo, concertina, and bones, and on the backs of the necks the old, old hats, such as are only now seen in the House of Commons, appeared close to the Prince's side, and favoured His Royal Highness with a version of "I'm off to Charlizetown." Next summer when they come out at Brighton, Ramsgate, Worthing, etc., they will announce themselves as the "Original Delhi Blacks of the Prince of Wales in India."

SLAVERY AT HOME.—While so much is being said about the national opinion against slavery, it may be as well for people to reflect upon the possibility of abhorring the name while tolerating the thing. In many countries there is really very little harm in slavery, but in free England there is often a very great deal of harm in open contract, resulting first in servitude, then in despair, then in—there are several ways of finishing the sentences. A clergyman writes to the paper: "I could name a thoroughly respect-

able young woman who, having been employed every day this week from Monday inclusive, for ten hours, except Saturday, when she was employed for six hours, with her own sewing machine, and without once having been found fault with, was paid 4s. 6d. Employers, I understand, refuse to make terms with their workpeople the first week, and perhaps they have some reason, but what guarantee have the workpeople against fraudulent oppression, such as in the instance above cited?" What can such a woman think as she takes home her week's wages on Saturday night past the door, let us say, of a music-hall, or through the Haymarket? Will the friends of freedom who have treated us to speeches on the Slave Circular give the matter their kind consideration?

JUDITH'S TEMPTATION.

How bright and cheerful the kitchen of the old Stedhurst farmhouse looked to Judith Black upon this dreary December evening when she first came there to live. How merrily the fire flickered on the walls with red, fantastic reflections. How the tins sparkled against the wall, and what a song of welcome the old copper teakettle sang upon the hearth. And Mrs. Stedhurst's geraniums in the window, with their green velvet leaves and spikes of vivid scarlet blossoms—to Judith they seemed fairer than any conservatory, crowded full of fan palms and camellias and trailing jessamine.

Judith Black had been very poor. She had been a dressmaker, but times were hard. Judith had striven to get work, but applicants were many, and the cup of starvation had been perilously close to her lips when she crept into the office where Edmund Stedhurst saw her and engaged her to help his mother about the house-work.

"I shan't like her, Ned," said Mrs. Stedhurst, when the "new girl" had gone up to her own room for the night, and mother and son were together before the kitchen fire.

"Why not, mother?"

"She is too pretty; and she has such a haughty, queenly sort of way. I should as soon think of asking a lady to scrub the floor and feed the pigs."

"That's nonsense, mother," said Edmund, half-veiled, half-laughing. "She can't help her face, can she? It is some of the scrappy-faced, small-pox-marked girls who were so exacting as to the wages they should receive and the duties they were to be called upon to perform that I wouldn't have 'em in the house on any terms. Judith was the only one who was willing to come for any sort of work, and willing to accept moderate wages."

"She'll suit you," said Mr. Stedhurst, who had come in while the discussion was going on. "Take my word for it, mother, she'll suit you."

Judith Black stayed a month, and then Mrs. Stedhurst engaged her for another month.

"She is neat," said that lady, "and she is quick to learn, and I believe her to be thoroughly trustworthy."

"If only Ned don't fall in love with her," humorously suggested Mr. Stedhurst.

"Why shouldn't he fall in love with her if he wants?" said Mrs. Stedhurst, valiantly.

"My dear, my dear," remonstrated Mr. Stedhurst, "what do we know about her?"

"What do we know about any girl, for that matter?" said Mrs. Stedhurst. "She is certainly very pretty, and very faithful, and very honest."

"Honest," put in Mr. Stedhurst, drily, "because she had no temptation to be otherwise."

"Now, Phineas, you are too bad," said Mrs. Stedhurst, impatiently. "The currant jelly has never been disturbed in the closet, and I've left the sugar-bowl twice on the dresser with thirty-three lumps of sugar in it and thirty-three there were, when I counted 'em, after she had gone to bed."

"No very great temptations those!" said Mr. Stedhurst, smiling.

"No," said his wife; "but straws show which way the wind blows."

About a month subsequently to this conversation Edmund Stedhurst came to his father.

"Father," said he, "I was twenty-two years old in October."

"Yes," said Mr. Stedhurst.

"And you were a year younger than that when you were married!"

"I believe so, Ned."

"Have you any objection to my taking a wife?"

"None in the world—if it proves that she is the right sort of a wife!" answered the old gentleman.

"Father, I have fallen in love with Judith Black," confessed Edmund.

"Just exactly what I have feared all along," said Mr. Stedhurst, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Why do you use that word 'feared,' father?" questioned Edmund.

"Because, my lad, she is almost a stranger to us."

"Father, I would stake my life on her truth and honesty," cried the young man.

"Because you are in love with her, my son. Edmund, look here. Have you spoken to her yet?"

"Not yet, sir."

"Will you do me a favour?"

Edmund smiled a little.

"That depends upon what it is, father."

"Will you wait one week before you ask her to be your wife? Will you wait one week, without asking any questions?"

"If you desire it, sir."

"At the end of that time I will tell you what I think upon the matter."

And Mr. Stedhurst went out, and left his son.

The day he brought down an armful of old coats, vests, etc., from the garret.

"Judith," said he, "these things are getting moth-eaten. They belonged to an old uncle of mine, who died ten years ago—an odd, miserly, old fellow who hoarded everything up, and died in a cellar at last. I want then cut up into carpet rags."

"Yes, sir," answered Judith Black, in the soft, low voice which was habitual to her. And when her day's routine of duty was done she went to work diligently with Mrs. Stedhurst's big shears.

She was all alone in the kitchen the next afternoon just as the clock was striking three. And as Judith Black worked she sang softly to herself an old Scotch ballad, "Bonnie Dandie."

Picking up an old waistcoat of ginger-coloured cloth she clipped off the buttons, and mechanically turned the pockets inside out to cut them away. There was a piece of folded brownish paper in one of them. Judith took it out, without thinking much of it, and unfolded it.

To her surprise she perceived that it was twenty-pound note.

In her first astonishment she uttered a little cry, all alone though she was. And then she remembered what Mr. Stedhurst had said about the miserly old uncle who had "hoarded up his little gains and died in a cellar at last." This, doubtless, was one of the old man's hiding-places—and he had died and made no sign.

And this precious bit of paper! was it not hers by right of discovery?

Her eyes gleamed and her fingers trembled convulsively as they tightened their grasp upon it! She needed it so much! She was so poor—so pinched for money! And these Stedhursts, to whom it would naturally revert, were rich and did not need it! They would never know. Nobody would know.

For a minute the temptation battled fiercely with her better nature. For a minute only; and then Judith rose up and went straight to the door to the tool-room—went with drooping eyelids and a scarlet stain on either cheek.

"Come in," said Mr. Stedhurst, as Judith knocked at the door, and she entered.

"Mr. Stedhurst," said she, in a voice that would falter a little, in spite of her resolution to control it, "here is some money, a twenty-pound note. I have found it in the pocket of one of those old waistcoats."

"Ah!" said Mr. Stedhurst, putting down his plane and taking the crumpled bit of paper. "And why didn't you keep it? Did it not occur to you that I would never know anything about it?"

"Yes," said Judith, slowly, "it did occur to me, sir."

"Then why didn't you keep it?"

"It was not mine," Judith answered, in a low tone.

"Judith," said old Phineas Stedhurst, "I put that money there!"

"You did?"

"I did. To test you. To make sure that the girl to whom my boy had given his heart was worthy of him."

Judith's face glowed a deep scarlet.

"I—I don't understand you, sir," said she.

"No, I suppose not. But you will in a few days."

And she did when Edmund Stedhurst asked her to be his wife.

"My own love," he said, "the house had been like a different place since you came into it. Will you promise me to stay here always?"

And Judith's answer was "Yes." A. R.

It is astonishing how the most solemn subjects are sometimes rendered absurd. The other day a funeral card sent out to friends on the occasion of the death of an individual bore, as an appropriate quotation

from Scripture; the words, "The Lord hath need of him." The above excerpt refers in Scripture to that useful but not eminently intellectual animal—the ass.

THE WHITE ROSE CHIEFTAIN;

OR,
THE DISPUTED CROWN.

CHAPTER XI.

When the news of the Earl of Beaufort's death spread through the neighbourhood, the gentry flocked to the castle on visits of condolence, and the old retainers gathered around him with sorrowful faces; the Duke of York despatched a courier with a letter written from the fullness of his heart, and Henry VI. penned a sympathetic letter to Lady Valencia.

The funeral services were conducted with the pomp due to his rank and wealth, and his family tomb received another Earl of Beaufort.

When these last sad rites were over, as Richmond could not think of leaving his betrothed wife alone, and she could not bear the idea of returning to busy London, he took her to Ludlow, where a part of the Duke of York's family still remained, and whither she had once journeyed in the guise of a pilgrim. He had not been there long when a cavalier came galloping furiously into the courtyard and flung himself off his palfrey steed with a graceful bound. It was the handsome, fair-browed golden-haired Edward Plantagenet, afterwards King of England.

"What brings you here?" asked Lionel Richmond, joining him in the hall.

"Our hollow peace with the House of Lancaster is at an end—foreign influence grows more and more distrustful, and the city is in a state of wildest excitement."

"Ah! say you so, Edward?"

"Yes, and my father wishes you to hasten to London."

"But, Valencia, how can I honourably leave her?" inquired Richmond.

"By my faith, if she is the woman I think her she will bid you go, and now a word more concerning her. I envy you your conquest, and only wish I had been fortunate enough to win Lady Valencia."

"And yet you are her presumptive to the crown?"

"It matters not, she would grace a throne. But there is no time to lose. I can scarcely wait to greet the ladies, and take a draught of wine and a morsel of food ere I must away."

With these words he drew Lionel's arm within his own, and hurried into the tower-room.

Gallantly he lifted Valencia's hand to his lips, kissed his younger brother, who was absorbed in his studies, and patted the small head of the squire that sprang to meet him, then he retired, with a significant glance, and Richmond was left to break the tidings to his betrothed.

As Edward had expected, she gave her assent to the proposal, and an hour later they had once more parted.

The cavaliers were half-way across the park, when a loud rustling in an adjacent copse, the twang of a bow, and the swift flight of an arrow, started Edward's horse, and he reared and plunged, throwing his rider to the ground.

"Are you hurt?" queried Richmond, bending from the saddle.

The young man's features contracted with pain, and he replied:

"Yes—yes; but I will try to rise nevertheless."

With these words he raised his head and attempted to lift his whole frame, but to no purpose, and, with a moan, he sank back.

"One thing is certain," observed Richmond, who was now at his side. "You cannot pursue your journey in such a plight. I will assist you home, and then fly to your father."

"There comes a woodman, and he can lend me a helping hand. Go, go; this is but a trifling injury, and I shall soon be with you."

And waving Lionel away, he beckoned the servant to his assistance.

When Richard arrived in London the city presented a striking contrast to the pleasant aspect during the pageant which has been styled by historians the procession of St. Paul's.

A slight mêlée between an English merchant and an Italian lord brought on a formidable riot, and the detestation of foreigners, which had been increased by dislike to Margaret of Anjou, filled the capital with loud confusion.

The mob, which had at first comprised but few, had swelled into a turbulent throng, who crowded the streets, shouting threats and imprecations, blocking up great thoroughfares and seriously impeding business.

The Lord Mayor, to whom the Italian had complained of the outrage he had received, had thrown the merchant into Newgate, but it was still surrendered to the mob, and some of the older and wiser citizens had so brought their influence to bear, that the rioters dispersed.

When the news of this riot reached the queen, the base part she took towards punishing the offenders swept away the last particle of affection which the inhabitants still retained for the house of Lancaster; from that hour the metropolitan populace adhered to the chiefs of the White Rose.

Ere Lionel Richmond had dismounted from his steed at Castle Baynard he had of course learned all the particulars, and when he met Richard Plantagenet he exclaimed:

"What a change, my father, since I left you!"

"Ay, lad, I stand in great need of you and Edward, where is he?"

The young man proceeded to relate the particulars of his accidental detention, and the duke said:

"By my faith, I hope that there is nothing serious, but since he is absent I must turn to you. The riot will probably be quelled, but I do not like to trust any dear to me in the metropolis, when the atmosphere is so stormy, and revolutions are so sudden and frequent. You must take the duchess and your sister back to Ludlow."

"I am always ready to do your bidding, and though I think the riot may in the end be favourable in our case, I do not wonder that you wish your family in a more quiet home."

The duke's purpose was carried out, and just before the young man left London a slip of parchment was thrust into his hand, on which the following words had been traced, in an unfamiliar hand:

"Lionel Richmond, prepare for a severe trial on your return to Ludlow. The Lady Valencia Lyndhurst will not be there to welcome you, for she has fled with the handsome and fascinating Edward Plantagenet, heir presumptive to the throne of England."

CHAPTER XII.

When Lionel Richmond had read the startling message he was just transcribing he stood for a time perplexed and bewildered. Young Plantagenet's admiration of Valencia and his words: "I envy you your conquest, she would grace a throne," came flashing back upon him as if to confirm the statement, but when he recalled the girl's unswerving constancy, and noble self-sacrifice he muttered:

"It is false, false as the heart which fabricated the story, and I will not believe it."

While he was speaking the Duchess of York appeared with her daughter, and, concealing the note, he was soon on his way to Ludlow. The journey had never before seemed half so long or tedious, for his anxiety with regard to his betrothed was still intense, and more than once he resolved to speak to his mother and sister, but something kept him silent. At length the terrors of the old family seat at Ludlow rose to view, and who should meet them at the park-gate but Edward Plantagenet himself. He looked pale and ill at ease, and moved with extreme difficulty by the aid of a staff.

"How fares it with you, Edward?" asked the duchess.

"Badly enough," cried the young man, "we are all in a most miserable plight, and I have borrowed the butler's staff that I might come and prepare you for evil tidings. A sad mischance has befallen us in your absence, Lionel."

"Valencia!" gasped Richmond, bitterly.

"I do not know how to break the tidings," he said, "but she has disappeared. I despatched a messenger to you immediately, but you must have missed him on your way."

"How did it happen?" inquired the duchess, while her fine eyes grew dim with tears.

"A page brought her a message purporting to be from Lady Bonville Seymour, requesting her to spend the day at Woodcote. She accordingly set off on her palfrey, attended by a page and groom, but we never have seen her since, and, in fact, they are all missing. As soon as we were satisfied she had met with some misadventure I had the alarm bell rang in the tower, and the neighbouring gentry came flocking in as if they had been summoned to battle their retainers with ours. We have been searching the whole day, but nothing has as yet been ascertained with regard to her fate."

The duchess and her daughter warmly expressed their regrets and rode on, while the young men lingered by the gateway.

We suppose that Lionel Richmond would have been less than human if he had not passed through a fierce struggle while he paced the greenward when the overwhelming truth fastened upon him that Lady Valencia was gone, but his nature was fresh and generous to a fault, and in a few minutes he said:

"See! see!"

As he spoke he placed the note in Plantagenet's hand.

The young man grasped it and as he read his brow knit, his lips curled, and a burning glow shot into his cheek.

"Lionel Richmond!" he exclaimed, "do you believe it? Tell me candidly as you hope for Heaven."

"I will, Edward. There have been moments when it has shaken my faith as I thought of your manly beauty and your evident admiration of Valencia, but I could not believe it of you, my adopted brother, with whom I had played in my boyhood and fought in my youth."

"That was spoken like Lionel Richmond. As Heaven is my witness, I know nothing about Lady Valencia's mysterious disappearing—save what I have told you to-day."

The young men clasped hands, and Richmond went on:

"Even if I had doubted you, it would have been sin to distrust Lady Valencia, after her proofs of devotion. I have enemies among the partisans of the Red Rose, who have plotted against my life and her peace, and I fear Lord Percy or Sir Jasper de Vere may know more than anybody else with regard to her doom."

Time rolled on, and though the most rigid search had been made for the lost Valencia, and liberal rewards offered for any information relative to her fate, nothing satisfactory could be elicited. Some declared a cavalier had been seen dashing through the night with wild speed, a veiled lady folded in his arms, some (quoted she had been borne to a foreign land and others that she had been incarcerated in the Tower, a victim to Lancastrian revenge.

The Duke of York, in a stern letter to Henry VI., charged her disappearance to warriors of the Red Rose and demanded her restoration.

The message was treated with contemptuous silence, and this, with the growing dislike to the foreign queen and unpopular movements of the Lancastrians gave fresh grounds for warfare.

During the summer Margaret of Anjou, in order to enlist the sympathies of the men at the north, carried the Prince of Wales through Chester, of which he had been created earl.

There she had presented his badge, a silver swan, to the adherents of the Red Rose, and was planning otherwise to strengthen their cause when the tocsin of war again pealed through England.

Richard Plantagenet was arraying the retainers of Mortimer beneath the White Rose banner; Salisbury, at the head of five thousand Yorkshire men-at-arms, was hastening to join the duke, and Warwick had already commenced his voyage from Calais with a band of far-famed warriors.

Under these circumstances, the queen despatched couriers to the court, from which she was absent, and a Lancastrian force was marshalled and sent to meet the Yorkists.

(To be continued.)

In reward of his services in successfully treating His Majesty for the carbuncle from which he has been suffering, the Sultan has made a handsome present of money to his medical attendant, and raised him to a rank equivalent with that of a general of division. He must wish His Majesty a carbuncle every year.

SLEEP is a boon commonly regarded as priceless, but it may be purchased too dearly. Macbeth murdered sleep; a very large and unhappily increasing number of well-meaning but misguided persons poison it. The medical profession has a keen interest in the growing practice of habitual recourse to sleep potions, because it is with the connivance of the profession, if not under its specific advice, that these soporific poisons are employed. We think the time has come when some strong means should be taken to clear medicine from the reproach of countenancing the lay use of opium, chloroform, chloral, chlorodyne, and the rest of the sleep producers. The public should be told that they are playing with poisons. If they escaped a so-called "accident" which ends in sudden death, they are scarcely to be congratulated, since if the body does not die, the brain is disordered or disorganized, the enfeebled, the moral character depraved, or evil hardly less deplorable than death are entailed. The consideration may be agonizing, but it is urgent. The sleep produced by these narcotics, or so called sedatives—let them act as they may on the nervous system directly or through the blood—is poisoned. Their use gives the persons employing them an attack of cerebral congestion, only differing in amount, not in kind, from the condition which naturally issues in death. There is grave reason to fear that the real nature of the operation by which these deleterious drugs, one and all, bring about the unconsciousness that burlesques natural sleep, is lost sight of, or wholly misunder-

stood, by those who have free recourse to poisons on the most frivolous pretences, or with none save the exigency of a morbid habit. Great responsibility rests on medical practitioners, and nothing can atone for the neglect of obvious duty. The voice of warning must be raised instantly and urgently if a crying abuse is to be arrested, and final loss of confidence in drugs avoided.

FACETIE.

"Jon printing?" exclaimed an old lady, the other day, as she peeped over her spectacles at the advertising page of a country paper. "Poor Job! they've kept him printing, week after week, ever since I learnt to read; and if he wasn't the patientest man that ever was he never could have stood it so long, no how!"

A NEW SHAKESPEARE READING.

(Adapted to the times.)

"All the world's a rink,
And all the men and women merely skaters."

—Punch.

THE WORST SLAVE CIRCULAR (by a brute of a bachelor).—The wedding-ring.—Punch.

"DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE."

NEAR-SIDE PASSENGER: "He evidently wants to race you."

DRIVER (disdainfully): "But you don't suppose for a moment, sir, that I'm going to race with one of them twopenny yallers?" —Punch.

THE CONQUERED CATERPILLAR.

CATERPILLAR: "Ah! talking of spelling-book, you know, I've often thought the word Xiphirrhynchus was rather a puzzler, eh?"

UNCERTAIN ORTHOGRAPHIST: "Eh? Oh, yes—I suppose it would be. I expect those Turkish Bouds—"

A DELICATE SITUATION.

MR. PUNCH—As the pantomimes are nearly over, I shall soon be out of place, and what do you think of my applying for the situation following?—

"Wanted, a Christian person who has seen better days, and would value a kind home more than high wages, as Nurse in a private family."

I'm a rare hand at nursing (ask Pantaloon if I'm not), and, though I'm often heard to exclaim "Oh, what a day we're having!" I don't at all mind owning that I've seen many better. People who have seen me steal a baby, and then thump it on the floor or treat it like a football, may entertain a doubt if I can be "a Christian person;" but people who in these days expect to find a servant who will work for them for kindness' sake, and next to nothing wages, may expect their advertisement to be treated as a joke, and answered by—A GOWN.—Punch.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.

OLD FASHIONED DOCTOR: "Well, madam, and how is our good gentleman to-day?"

NEW FASHIONED WIFE: "Well, the servant says he seems rather better. Haven't been up to see him myself, as you said what he is suffering from is catching?"

A LITTLE "PUT OUT."

CANDIDATE FOR SEAGE: "And of course, m'm, the washing's put out?"

LADY: "Oh, yes."

C.: "And the boots, and knives and forks, and—"

LADY (hesitating): "Er—I really—"

C.: "And I shouldn't like to have to make the beds?"

LADY: "Oh, if you like, we'll put them out too—with the washing!" —Punch.

ON THEIR METAL.

The trade of Darlington has materially increased since the Prince of Wales took to boar-spearling in India. The amount of pig-iron employed at home is also supposed to have something to do with it.—Punch.

SHORTLY after the money-order office was opened at a village in Kent, an old gentleman who was leaving his farm, employed an auctioneer to conduct the sale of his effects. Not having sufficient money on hand to pay the auctioneer's fee, he promised, at that gentleman's request, to forward it in the course of a few days by post-office order. A month passed, but no word was received about the money. A messenger was at length sent for it. When he made his business known, the old farmer pulled out his pocket-book, and producing a post-office order, said, "There, man, is my receipt from the post-office that I paid it a month ago—and I'm not going to pay it a second time!"

MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.—The Duke of Edinburgh is going to give something more than his patronage to the New National Musical Training School of Kensington. His Royal Highness, we hear, contemplates giving lectures on the national wind instrument of Scotland, with personal illustrations on the bag-

pipes. Of course there will be a bagpipe scholarship to add to the host of scholarships already announced. The question as to "who will pay the piper" has not yet been answered. Doubtless, H.R.H., as England's sailor prince, will also throw in a bagpipe scholarship. The lucky winner of both honours will be known as Kensington bag-and-hornpiper to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, by appointment. So far, the prospects of the new National Musical Training School are magnificent! —Punch.

ADDITION to the pageant.—The Lady Help.—Punch.

AN OLD KING BY A NEW NAME.
TIMKINS: "Good morning! A—e—I want a costume of Henry the Fourth of England, if you please!"

LA BELLE COSTUMIERE (affably, but not without a touch of scorn): "Excuse me, sir! Henry the Eighth of England! Henry the Fourth was a French king!"

THE COSTUMIER (solving the difficulty): "Parkins! Parkins!"

VOICE (in the distance): "Yes, sir!"

THE COSTUMIER: "Bring down the 'Angry Cat'!"

He must have meant "Henri Quatre," but that was what he said.—Punch.

SPRING.

The golden spring-time called the flowers,
And into gladdening life they sprang;
From leafy trees, and woodland bowers
The notes of thrush and robin rang.

And in the woodland's soft, cool shade,
We sat and told our warm, true love;
And watched the white cloud's shadow laid
Across the sunlight far above.

Such was my sky, in those sweet days;
A sky with but a mist upon;
My life was musical with lays,
But soon the autumn-time drew on.

The autumn-time, the vintage time!
I looked to find the golden grain;
The seeds sown when life seemed sublime
Now yielded but the fruits of pain.

For he had gone, and in my heart
The thorns of care grow side by side
With love's sweet rose; they would not part,
And soon the love-flower drooped and died.

And this, the vintage of my life;
And this, the harvest whence hope fled;
A winter of discord and strife
Drew on, and sunny spring was dead.

H. M.

GEMS.

WHERE there is much light the shadow is deep.

EXPERIENCE keeps a dear school, but idiots will learn in no other, and scarce in that; for it is true we may give advice, but we cannot give conduct.

The silliest of all errors is when young men think their forfeit claims to originality if they acknowledge any truth that has been discovered before them.

We should learn never to interpret duty by success. The opposition which assails us in the course of obedience is no evidence that we are mistaken.

In life it is difficult to say who do you the most mischief—enemies with the worse intentions, or friends with the best.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

SEIZED OYSTERS.—Two hundred oysters, two dozen cloves, five dozen allspice, also mace, cayenne pepper and salt to taste. Strain the liquor through a sieve, put in a saucepan, and add the oysters, spice, pepper, salt, and a half-pint of cider vinegar; place them over a slow fire, and as soon as they come to a boil take them off, pour them into a large bowl and set them away to cool; when cold cover them close.

APPLES.

In the hurry of housework the baking of apples, considered a small affair, is overlooked, and if the fruit can be sufficiently reduced by the heat it matters not how it is done. This will make anything but an acceptable dish—acceptable to the eye as to

the palate. You want every apple to remain perfect, retaining its shape, and not to be an undistinguishable mass of pulp, core and peel, baked next to dryness, or insufficiently cooked at the centre of the fruit.

To bake an apple properly is a nice thing, requiring attention. The first thing is uniformity of heat. We emphasize this, as it is indispensable. Too much or too little heat is at all times faulty. Hence a coal stove is the place to bake an apple.

You must acquire by experience the amount of heat needed. The time depends somewhat on the thickness of the peel, and the amount of moisture held. It is this holding the moisture while baking that is the secret of successfully taking an apple. It is confining the steam which, gets up a commotion and reduces the pulp to a fine texture, a thorough reduction leaving the skin a thin silken covering, holding the flavour and aroma. This is an advantage to highly flavoured fruit, but it also improves an apple of inferior quality, lessening the acid.

To secure all this, an apple should be exposed to gentle heat from three to five hours, according to size, and whether sweet or sour; a sweet apple requiring more time. As soon as removed from the fire lay open the fruit, remove the "core," and put some white sugar over it, close up and save.

BREAKFAST ROLLS.—Mix half an ounce of sifted white sugar in two pounds of the finest flour; make a hole in the centre, and put in about two table-spoonsful of fresh yeast, mixed with a little water; let it stand all night. In the morning add the yolks of two eggs, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, and sufficient warm milk to make it of a right consistency; divide into rolls (about twelve or fourteen); bake half an hour in brick oven.

STATISTICS.

VALUE OF EXPORTED BOOKS.—The money value of the printed books exported from the United Kingdom in 1875 is returned at £15,099, against 904,792, in 1874. Some returns of the like kind for the years 1832 and 1845 lie before us, which are worth quoting in illustration of the advance made by English literature abroad, independently of the aid of foreign publishing houses. In 1832 the value of books exported is put down at £3,038, of which 15,863, worth went to the United States, 6,955, worth to Germany, and 5,518, worth to France; it is curious to notice in this return that Prussia, which is entered on the list apart from Germany, received books from us only worth 34s. In 1854 the total exports had just doubled in value, being 186,478; the United States were our customers to the extent of 36,030; Germany, 7,813; France, 11,932; while Prussia had increased its purchases to 834s. The books exported in 1870 were valued at £30,355, and in 1874 the United States alone took 374,043, worth. The returns for each country separately during last year have not reached us.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Prince of Wales will leave India by the "Serapis," and His Royal Highness will land at Portsmouth. The Osborne will accompany the "Serapis."

HOW TO GROW FAT.—It is said that a pint of milk taken every night just before retiring to rest will soon make the thinnest figure plump. Here is a simple and pleasant means by which thin women may acquire plump, rounded figures.

THE Grand Duchess Marie Nicolaievna, whose death took place recently, was the eldest daughter of the Emperor Nicholas and the Empress Frederique Louise Charlotte Wilhelmine, daughter of Frederick William III., King of Prussia, and was born August 18th, 1812. She married, in 1839, Maximilian Duke de Leuchtenberg, Prince D'Elchevsky, and after his death, in 1856, Gregoire, Count Stroganoff. The Grand Duchess Marie was well known in English society from her frequent visits to this country, and her occasional residence at the Isle of Wight and Torquay.

It is reported that there is a project of the sale by Turkey to Great Britain of the Isle of Candia, which would be made use of as a station for our fleet, if called on to protect the Isthmus of Suez Canal in case of war. The negotiations concerning this acquisition are said to be conducted secretly and in an officious way outside the Embassy by General Sir Arnot Kemble, the British Commissioner for the delimitation of the Turco-Persian frontiers. Even the sum required by the Turks for the sale of Candia, a sum of forty millions sterling, is mentioned. The thing looks prima facie probable, if one bears in mind that Candia yields no revenue worth speaking of to the Turks.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. A.—A cornet is a commissioned officer in a regiment of cavalry. He is immediately inferior to a lieutenant, and his rank corresponds to that of an ensign in a battalion of infantry.

E. K.—Wax candles do not require snuffing, because the wick is made of very thin thread, which the heat of the flame is sufficient to consume. The wick of tallow candles is made of coarse cotton, which is too substantial to be consumed by the heat of the flame, and must be cut off by snuffers.

S. B.—The system by double-entry, called originally Italian book-keeping, was taken from the course of algebra which was published by Burgo, at Venice, then a great commercial state, in the fifteenth century. It was made known in England by James Peale, who published his Book-keeping in 1560.

J. B.—An intercalary day was thrown into every fourth year to adjust the calendar and make it agree with the sun's course. It originated with Julius Cæsar, who ordered a day to be counted before the 24th of February, which among the Romans was the day of the calendar, and which was therefore reckoned twice and called bissextile; this added day we name the 24th of February every fourth year.

C. A. W.—To melt some bits of gold and cast into different shapes, place the gold in a small black lead crucible with a little borax, and subject it to a very bright red heat for some time, or until complete fusion ensues. Moulds made of iron slightly waxed or greased are used for this purpose. A flux is needed. Small beads of both gold and silver may be fused in charcoal, when mixed with a small quantity of borax and heated strongly by means of a blowpipe or blast lamp.

C. F.—When this stone was first prized is not known; it was the ninth in place upon the breastplate of the Jewish high priests, and the name Issaiar was engraved upon it. It is of a rich violet colour, and, according to Plutarch, takes its name from its colour, resembling the wine mixed with water. One worth 200 rix dollars having been rendered colourless, equalled a diamond in lustre, valued at 18,000 gold crowns.—Do Boot Hist, Gemmarum. Amethysts were discovered at Korry, in Ireland, in 1753.

E. M.—How to win a husband is one of the few secrets which women keep to themselves. We are not in it. But we do not sympathize with you in your horror of being an old maid. Some old maids are excellent persons. Just think how much better to be an old maid than one of the unhappy married women whose letters we publish! Many husbands who write to us wish their wives were old maids, and many wives who write to us wish that they had never been married. Be content with your lot—if you do not have an offer!

E. G. ENGLISH.—1. There is a difference of opinion among poultry-raisers as to which are the best varieties, some preferring one and some another. As egg-producers Leghorns or black Spanish are as good as any, and better than most varieties. A good table fowl is produced by a cross formed with Brahma hens and a Dorking cock. Brahmas are also good layers, producing very large eggs. 2. Corn is the principal food, but should be alternated with wheat screenings, oats and buckwheat. During the winter, when no worms or insects are to be had, beef or pork scraps, or a sheep's pluck occasionally, are very good.

ERRATA.—First—Should a young lady on being introduced to a gentleman shake hands? Second—Do you think the study of Shakespeare is elevating to our moral nature? If not, why have his works gained such popularity? Third—What is the meaning of Ma mere and La petite? Fourth—Do you think it is wrong to play checkers in a private circle of friends, when they play just for amusement and not for money? 1. Yes, if she chooses to do so. 2. The reader's understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare must be considered. His popularity is owing to his transcendental genius. 3. Ma mere means my mother; and La petite means the little one. 4. There is no harm in playing checkers for amusement.

A YOUNG ORATOR.—It is generally believed that the speaker is not readily abashed, but having once mounted his rhetorical steed reaches the end of his course in glib style, overlooking all obstacles. Now, this is one of the errors which people who judge by appearances alone are wont to fall into, for numerous stories are told of orators whose self-possession was overthrown by the most trifling, and their carefully studied oratorical efforts ruined in consequence. Take the famous Curran, for example. He had a sensitiveness in public speaking which often hindered his success. He was painfully af-

fected by any mark of inattention in his audience. His eloquence began to flag, and much of his power was lost if any one were sleeping, or gazing vacantly about the court. This fact became so well-known at last that some of the eminent advocates opposed to him resorted to unworthy tricks to help their clients. When they saw that Curran was more than ordinarily eloquent and was carrying the jury with him, they would hire some man to go into the court, and sitting near him, to show signs of weariness by visible and loud yawning. The stratagem rarely failed of success. The eloquent spirit would droop its wings and forsake him; he would falter, forget the thread of the argument, and bring his peroration to an abrupt and unsatisfactory conclusion.

H. S. T.—Scolding is mostly a habit. There is not much meaning to it. It is often the result of nervousness and an irritable condition of both mind and body. A person is tired or annoyed at some trivial cause and forthwith commences finding fault with everything and everybody in reach. Scolding is a habit very easily formed. It is astonishing how soon one who indulges in it at all becomes addicted to it and confirmed in it. It is an unreasoning and unreasonable habit. Persons who once get in the way of scolding always find something to scold about. Women contract the habit more frequently than men. This may be because they live more constantly in the house, in a confined and heated atmosphere, very trying to the nervous system and health in general, and it may be partly that their natures are more susceptible and their sensitiveness more easily wounded.

CLARA.—All last winter a young gentleman appeared to be very much attached to me. But toward spring he seemed to change and flirted with other young ladies. These young ladies said that he had ceased to care for me. Supposing that he had given them reason to think so, I returned his ring by letter. He sent me a note, saying he was very sorry if he had hurt my feelings in any way. All this time he was attentive to these other young ladies. Well, he called once after he sent me the note and was the same as usual. I asked him to call again, when he left, and he said he would, but did not. We were friends to all appearances after that; only he never called. The other day he called again and has called once or twice since. In our judgment Clara had better let this erratic gentleman go on his way. To not let such a way with a lady is too small—it is below her. Let him alone till he comes to himself, and if he does not, you lose nothing.

BY THE WINDOW.

Mabel by the window sitting—
While her thoughts afar are flitting—
Has a vision, oh, so bright!
She is raptured at the sight.

Idle are her slender fingers,
As she with her fancy lingers,
To that fair maid of the song,
Where all sorrow is unknown.

She is plucking fairy flowers,
All unconscious of the hours,
While the task that love demands
Lies neglected in her hands.

Far away from homely duties,
In a land so full of beauties,
Many a maiden longs to dwell,
Yielding to the magic spell.

Vain the longing, vain the vision,
Here begins the path Elysian,
Love no answer to the demands
That are made with idle hands.

Cease thy dreaming, keep on doing,
Cheerfully thy tasks pursuing;
Let the world go right or wrong,
Fill thy dwelling full of song!

A. M.—To produce a fine high colour on gold jewellery: Boil 8 ozs saltpetre, 4 ozs alum and 4 ozs common salt together in a porcelain or other fireproof vessel (not metal), in barely sufficient water to dissolve them; add 9 ozs. strong muriatic acid to this solution, and filter. To colour with the foregoing mixture, anneal the work twice and boil it each time after annealing in a pickle consisting of 8 parts water and 1 part sulphuric acid. Then pour a sufficient quantity of the colouring mixture into a porcelain dish, and heat it to about 150 deg. Fah. Hold the work in this for about two minutes, then take it out and rinse it in clean water. If not sufficiently coloured to suit, repeat the process until the desired colour is obtained. Another and more common method among jewellers is to make a kind of paste, consisting of two parts saltpetre and one part each of alum, sulphate of zinc, common salt, and a little water. These ingredients are well mixed in a mortar, and the articles to be coloured are covered with the paste, laid up on an iron plate and heated over a clear fire nearly to a black heat. They are then suddenly plunged into cold water and well washed. This insures a beautiful high colour.

LOWLY EMMA. twenty-one, black hair and blue eyes, tall, would like to correspond with a tall, fair gentleman about twenty-eight or thirty; respondent must be fond of music.

QUIET ANNIE, nineteen, fair hair and brown eyes, would like to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman about twenty-six; a tradesman preferred.

LIVELY HARRIET, seventeen, brown hair and blue eyes, wishes to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman from twenty-two to twenty-four; respondent must be fond of dancing.

B. twenty-five, good looking, medium height, respectable, steady and fond of home, has a little money, wishes to correspond with a young lady about seventeen.

MARY, twenty-six, medium height, dark hair and eyes, wishes to correspond with a domesticated young woman from nineteen to twenty-one.

MARY, nineteen, medium height, cheerful, domesticated and good looking, wishes to correspond with a young

man; respondent must be dark, affectionate and fond of home.

E. M., seventeen, medium height, fair complexion, wishes to correspond with a young man; respondent must be tall.

GEORGE J., dark, considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a young woman about twenty, with a view to matrimony.

AWNIE, twenty, fair complexion, brown hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a fair young man with a view to matrimony.

B. M., eighteen, steady, tall, good looking, a clerk by profession, wishes to correspond with a fair young lady about seventeen or eighteen, who must be affectionate and domesticated.

JOHN J., a colour-sergeant in the Royal Marines, who will soon be in receipt of a good pension, would like to correspond with a lady about twenty or thirty, with a view to matrimony; a widow with a little money preferred.

M. M., twenty-one, medium height, dark complexion, considered good looking, good tempered, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a good looking young lady with a view to matrimony.

CALPHI, twenty-three, medium height, dark, considered good looking, would like to correspond with a respectable young lady about eighteen, with a view to matrimony.

G. J., twenty-five, tall, dark, considered good looking, loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-eight; respondent must be dark, good looking, and fond of home.

ELISA, nineteen, fair complexion, good looking, loving disposition, wishes to correspond with a fair-complexioned young gentleman about twenty-four, with a view to matrimony.

MARY, twenty-four, good looking, medium height, dark, considered good looking, and fond of home, would like to correspond with a tall, good looking young gentleman.

M. M., twenty-five, medium height, considered good looking, wishes to correspond with a thoroughly domesticated young lady about nineteen, with a view to matrimony.

ALBERT M., twenty-four, medium height, good looking, fond of home, wishes to correspond with a young lady between eighteen and twenty-two, with a view to matrimony.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MARY is responded to by—Sarah B. twenty, medium height.

A. B. by—Fanny, twenty-two, medium height, domesticated and fond of home.

E. K. by—Bertha, twenty-one, medium height, dark complexion, good looking, and thinks he is all she requires.

DAVE B. by—Bertha, twenty, medium height, good looking, fond of home, and will have some money when of age.

FOUR by—Matthew M., twenty-two, medium height, dark complexion, fond of home and children, and has a little money.

QUIR by—Norah, eighteen, tall, dark hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, fond of home and children, will have some money when of age.

K. S. S. by—M. A., eighteen, tall, fair complexion, considered handsome, thoroughly domesticated, and thinks she is all he requires.

D. by—Robin, twenty, medium height, considered good looking, an artist by profession; and by—Kraut, twenty, tall, fair hair, blue eyes, and thinks he is all she requires.

WILLIAM by—Lively Georgina, eighteen, medium height, a lively and good looking brunette, fond of home and dancing.

T. S. by—Ann, seventeen, rather short, considered handsome, very amiable and loving disposition; and by—Elin, nineteen, medium height, a handsome blonde, well educated, and has travelled over most of the Continent.

M. S., twenty-seven, a navigating lieutenant in the Royal Navy, tall dark hair and eyes, considered very handsome, would like to correspond with a thoroughly domesticated young lady between nineteen and twenty-three; respondent must possess a little money of her own.

B. S., twenty-one, a seaman in the Royal Navy, tall dark hair and eyes, has saved a little money, wishes to correspond with a respectable and thoroughly domesticated young woman about eighteen, with a view to matrimony.

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